

**THE RELIGIOUS ENVIRONMENT
IN WHICH MORMONISM AROSE**

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE RELIGIOUS ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH
MORMONISM AROSE

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
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BY
GEORGE SHEPHERD TANNER

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INTRODUCTION

The terms *Mormon* and *Mormonism* will be used in this thesis since they are more generally known than the official title, "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints".

The writer realizes that the subject, "The Religious Environment in Which Mormonism Arose", is far too broad to be properly treated in so small a paper as this, but since this field has been practically untouched in previous investigations, and the whole passed off in a few paragraphs or at most in a few pages, by those writing on the subject of the Mormons, it was considered proper to cast the subject as stated. The material will, of course, have to be handled in a very summary fashion, and in many instances matter which would seem of importance will be left out entirely. This explanatory statement is necessary at the beginning so that continual apologies will not need to be made.

A WORD AS TO SOURCES

It is so seldom that one finds an article of any kind on the subject of Mormonism that has not been prompted by some motive other than arriving at the truth, that the casual reader and even the more or less careful student finds it entirely impossible to gain a fair estimate of the Mormon Church. Practically all non-Mormon writers have been prompted by prejudices which range all the way from a determined desire to injure the church through exposing its evil practices and its absurdities, to the individual who thinks he is unbiased, but who has not been able to overcome his previous prejudices. Coupled with this prejudice there is a notable amount of unpreparedness in treating this very complicated subject. Most writers have felt satisfied to under-

take the work with only the most superficial acquaintance with the subject.¹ It is no wonder then, that when books are written from a biased point of view, and with very imperfect knowledge, that the true situation is very badly distorted. Even the best qualified and least prejudiced non-Mormon writers have failed to have a sympathetic attitude, which is indispensable if a proper point of view is to be had. The books written about the Mormons tend to give about the same distorted conception of the Mormons, as a history of the Baptists would of that people in the late colonial period, if most of the book were spent in dealing with their violation of the laws of the colonies.

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1. A point in hand is that of two English students, Ruth and E. W. Kauffman, who in 1912 prepared for publication, "The Latter Day Saints, A Study of the Mormons". In their explanation of the sources from which Smith got the Book of Mormon, they write, "In 1839 the widow of Spaulding published a statement in a Boston, Massachusetts, newspaper which led to a public meeting. At this meeting the manuscripts of The Manuscript Found, and The Book of Mormon, (underlined words are in italics) were compared, and it was established beyond question that the similarity of the two could not be disregarded. The names of the different characters were exactly the same, and whole pages were word for word alike. Moreover, since Spaulding had not been an educated man, traces of illiteracy were observable in his work, and these errors were repeated in The Book of Mormon". p. 30.

As a matter of fact the Manuscript Found was not used at a public meeting in Boston in 1839, or anywhere else during this period for the simple reason that it could not be found, and it was not until 1884 that President Fairchild of Oberlin College, Ohio, came into possession of it. If the statement made by the Kauffmans were true, the entire controversy concerning the dependence of the Book of Mormon on the Spaulding Manuscript would have been unnecessary. In view of the numerous attempts made to locate the Spaulding Manuscript, and to link it with the Book of Mormon, the account the Kauffmans give of its being used in the Boston meeting is so absurd that it is amusing.

For a recent investigation of the above matter see, Daryl Chase, "Sidney Higdon, Mormon Leader", University of Chicago Thesis, 1931.

It is true that they did violate some of the laws, but instead of magnifying these any good historian would place much more emphasis upon their contribution to the securing of religious liberty. At present Chicago is suffering through advertising which has played up conspicuously its crime wave and lawlessness. A history of Chicago for the past decade could conceivably be written in which the unfavorable elements were so conspicuously played up as to completely obscure the true development of the city. But no person writing such a history would think that he had done a scientific piece of work. It is the hope of this writer that the time will soon arrive when non-Mormon historians of ability will find it convenient to write upon this subject with the desire to place the proper emphasis upon the things deserving treatment, and not spend the large part of the book in 'muck raking'. If scholars could approach the subject with something of the scholarship and sympathy that Moore and Herford (Christians) have the much abused subject of Judaism, there would be an entirely different story told of the Mormons.

But the Mormon histories and sources are also biased, being written entirely from the Mormon point of view, and no opportunity is lost by them to make it appear that the Mormons were always in the right and the gentiles in the wrong. On the question of bias and prejudice there seems to be about an equal amount exhibited in the pro-Mormon and anti-Mormon books. But when it comes to exhibiting the facts, colored though they may be, there may be an advantage on the side of the Mormon writers. At least this seems to be the conclusion of Nile A. Quaife, in his recent

book, "The Kingdom of St. James",² which is a history of the J. J. Strang movement. He states that when he was collecting his material for that subject, that the popular materials used by the fictionist and feature writer was a "compound of legend and prejudice", and were for his purpose "practically worthless, yet the average reader accepts these as veritable history". In commenting upon the accuracy of J. J. Strang's writings he says, "Undoubtedly Strang was a writer not without guile, able on occasion to temper his narrative to saintly needs and sensibilities; but as between it and the usual gentile compound of hatred, fiction and fable, there can be no doubt that Strang's narrative is much the saner and more reliable".

In summing up the value of the two groups of writings (i.e. the pro-Mormon and the anti-Mormon) it is probably fair to say that both exhibit about equal amounts of bias, while facts have been more distorted by the non-Mormon writers.

CHAPTER I.

THE NEW YORK HOME OF THE SMITHS

Mormonism was founded in Western New York in 1830. Its founder, Joseph Smith, lived in or near Palmyra, Wayne County, most of the time from 1815 until sometime after the founding of the church. Because of

2. See especially, pages 180, 181. To this writer it seems that Quail has approached his task in this book with a more sympathetic attitude than has been done by any of the non-Mormon historians. He has tried to get a glimpse of their point of view, as well as that of the opposition.

the importance of this section in connection with the rise of the church it seems desirable to devote some space to the history of its settlement.

Western New York was not settled until after we had gained our independence in the war against Great Britain. This was due largely to the fact that it was inhabited by the powerful and warlike tribes known as the Iroquois.³ These tribes had formed a confederacy, and by this confederation and their clever diplomacy in playing England against France and France against England they had maintained almost complete control of the section.⁴ These tribes assisted England in the Revolutionary war and were a source of annoyance and terror to the colonists during those trying years. To destroy this menace General Sullivan was sent into the territory in the late summer of 1779. He proceeded up the Susquehanna and Tioga Rivers past what is now Elmira and entered the strong hold of the Senecas, one of the Iroquois nations. He was successful in breaking the power of the Indians and they made little trouble thereafter.⁵ But more important from our present interest, he and his soldiers, who were chiefly from the New England Section, brought home stories of the wonders and beauty of the country they had traversed. These reports had an important bearing on the later colonization of this section.

At the close of the war the colonies made numerous treaties with the Indians with the view of winning their confidence and good will.

3. These tribes were the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, Senecas and the Tuscaroras.

4. Milliken, History of Ontario Co., New York. p. 3.

5. Barber and Howe, Historical Collections of State of New York. p. 38.

but they found them extremely difficult to deal with since they were within easy communication with the British in Canada and they were still smarting under the devastating campaign of General Sullivan. It was not until 1794 that a satisfactory understanding was reached.⁶

After the successful termination of the war the colonists found time to turn their attention to other things, one of the most important of which was expansion. This immediately brought on complications due to the fact that the charters of the different colonies had not been clear, and in several cases land was claimed by two or more of the colonies. Massachusetts and New York both claimed the section in New York with which we are dealing.⁷ In 1786 commissioners were appointed by the two states to settle the difficulty and they did so at Hartford, Connecticut, on the 16th of December of that year. It was agreed that Massachusetts should have the right to sell and receive the proceeds from the land west of a line running from the 82nd milestone in the Pennsylvania boundary, north to Lake Ontario.⁸ There was also a concession of several townships east of this line. New York was to have the right of jurisdiction. Most of this land was sold by Massachusetts to two gentlemen, Phelps and Gorham, who extinguished the Indian claim to some of the purchase and returned the rest to the state.⁹ The land immediately adjoining this Phelps and Gorham purchase on the east was known in the early history as the military tract because it had been set aside in

6. Milliken, History of Ontario Co., New York. p. 30.
 7. Upham, Mass. H., "The Life of Timothy Fickering". Vol. III Chapt. 2.
 8. Connecticut also made claims but we will not discuss her claims here.
 9. This is roughly speaking all the territory west of Seneca lake. See chart following page 10.
 10. The details of the land transactions will not be given. Information on this is abundant. See especially C. Turner, History of the Pioneer Settlement of Phelps and Gorham Purchase.

1782 by the state for its veterans of the war. The military tract is not so important in our study as is the Phelps-Gorham purchase, but some portions of it, especially in the north-west section, are the scene of some of the important events in connection with the early history of the church.

The Phelps-Gorham territory, even though it is farther west than the military tract was settled at an earlier period. This is partly accounted for by the fact that Phelps and Gorham were pushing the sale of their land, but more largely due to the confusion incident to the giving away of the other land to the soldiers. It was several years after the close of the war before anything like system and order obtained in connection with the handling of the lands intended for the soldiers. During this time there was no confusion in the Phelps-Gorham lands, and since they were very cheap, it was natural that immigrants should go farther west where a land office was open ready to make sale of the land and guarantee title, rather than take the chance of being unable to secure title on the military lands.

The land of the Phelps-Gorham purchase was known in the early history as the Genesee country, because of the important river there by that name. This country came to be talked about in all the eastern states as one affording incomparable opportunity to those who wished to make it their home, and even in England it was advertised and was the cause of numerous immigration. In many respects it was truly a remarkable land. Early writers are unanimous in their praise of the unusual opportunities it afforded for cheap and extraordinarily fertile soil; of the splendid water power, which would be important in the industrial development of the country; of the variety and quality of

the timber; of the matchless water connections, which before the age of the steam engine were so important; and of a market not more distant than the one to which they were accustomed.¹⁰

Rev. John A. Clark, a missionary traveling through the north-central part of the Genesee country, and in the very section made famous by the Prophet Joseph Smith, makes the following observation: "I never fail while traveling through this region, to be impressed with the conviction that this is the garden of America. The soil itself has, in every field you pass, and upon every hillside and vale to which you turn your eye, ten thousand witnesses to attest its astonishing fertility."¹¹

There were one or two attempts to settle the country before the Phelps-Gorham group cut its way through to Canandaigua. Notchkin states that the first settlers were Roswell Franklin and family, who in 1783 settled near present Aurora.¹² They were from Pennsylvania and came up the Susquehanna, following much the same route the army under Sullivan had used. Barber and Howe give the credit of making the first settlement to Hugh White, who founded Whitestown, in 1784.¹³ He, in company with five other families from Connecticut, made this settlement near Utica. But at least the first settlement of real significance was that made at Canandaigua under the direction of Gorham, son of one of the purchasers. In the spring of 1789, in company with a party of people from his home state, (Massachusetts) he set out upon the rather hazardous undertaking of founding a settlement in what is now Ontario county. He followed the natural water courses, the Mohawk and Seneca

10. O'Callaghan, The Documentary History of the State of New York.

Vol. II, p. 647

11. Gleanings by the Way. p. 179

12. History of Western New York. p. 17

13. Historical Collections of New York. p. 17.

Rivers, and after numerous difficulties succeeded in reaching Canadaigua.

The earliest immigrants came by way of the Mohawk and Seneca Rivers. "In the absence of other means of travel, the navigable waters of the lakes and streams were the first highways, and along these the pioneers built their first log cabins and cleared their first land. These thoroughfares had been used by the native races and by traders for a long period."¹⁴ The natural water routes into the section were really quite remarkable, it being possible to gain ingress by four distinct ways.¹⁵ The water routes were later improved by the construction of canals, the most important being the Erie which was finished in 1825, and continued to be important until gradually superseded by more rapid methods of transportation.

Before the development of the water system, and before the roads were made suitable for the passage of wagons, many of the immigrants succeeded in making the journey in sleighs. The snow lay on the ground long enough in the winter for the trip to be made in sleighs, and if the weather was not too severe it could be successfully accomplished without undue hardships. In fact teams could pull much larger loads with sleighs than with wagons. One witness says "within the space of five weeks last winter, (about 1798) five-hundred-seventy sleighs, with families passed through Geneva".¹⁶ Another writer says, "The number of

14. C. A. Smith, Pioneer times in Onondaga County. p. 148

15. This country could be entered via St. Lawrence and Great Lakes; the Hudson River-Mohawk-and Seneca; The Susquehanna and Tioga; or the Mississippi and Tributaries.

16. O'Callaghan, The Documentary History of the State of New York. Vol. II., p. 869

families that came into this country last winter (1798) far exceed any former year. Not less than three thousand people are supposed to have come into the counties of Ontario and Steuben in the course of six weeks last winter¹⁷

It was not long, however, before roads of passable quality were made and then the largest single method of transportation was undoubtedly the covered wagon. C. A. Smith, in speaking of the period after the roads were made passable says, "the old Connecticut schooner, the long canvass-covered wagon, conveying family and belongings, the stove, cooking utensils and household furniture with the family cow and dog, and often a couple of pigs, vividly recalls the daily spectacle seen here sixty years ago....."¹⁸ It was in a covered wagon that the Smith family moved to Palmyra in 1815 (or 1816).

"Emigrants to Western New York were generally drawn thither by regard to temporal circumstances. They were not like the original emigrants to New England, fleeing from persecution, and seeking a place where they might worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience, without molestation. It was not a missionary enterprise to civilize and Christianize the aborigines of the country. But the great object with them was to improve their temporal circumstances."¹⁹

While the economic urge was the cause prompting the largest number to go west, there were those who went for the love of adventure, which this unsettled country would be sure to gratify. Others, perhaps, found themselves too much restrained by the conventionalities of the New England states and sought the more complete freedom of the frontier.

17. Ibid. 665.

18. Pioneer times in Onondaga Country. p. 21.

19. Hetchkins, History of Western New York. p. 25.

Hotchkiss, in speaking of this class says, "some in removing to this western region, plainly manifested from their manner of life after their removal, that one principal object in their removal was to get rid of the restraints which civil law and public sentiment connected with religious institutions imposed upon them in the Eastern States from which they emigrated".²⁰ Hotchkiss was a Presbyterian minister who came into the western section in 1801, and it is only natural that the apparently irreligious attitude of the people should be quickly noticed by him. He would interpret this, whether true or not, as a willful break with the New England establishment.²¹ No doubt many did resent the imposition of an established religion upon them, and the frontier probably had more than its proportion of them.

A large proportion of the early settlers were from the New England States. It could well be called a "New" New England.²² A number of reasons can be given to explain why it was first settled by New Englanders, among which would be the influence of Sullivan's soldiers who were mostly from the New England States; the inferiority of the New England soil and the lack of room there; and finally the influence of Phelps and Gorham, the original purchasers of the tract. Phelps and Gorham were both citizens of Massachusetts at this time and the land was certainly better advertised in New England than elsewhere. As time went on Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey furnished immigrants and still later large numbers came from Europe.

20. History of Western New York. p. 25.

21. Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Hampshire had Congregationalism as an established church at this time.

22. Lois K. Matthews, Expansion of New England. p. 160.
Timothy Dwight, Travels, iii, 179.

The history of the settlements for the first few years are best understood by an acquaintance with the settlement and development of Canandaigua. A small tavern was erected on the site by Joseph Smith--probably no relation to the founder of the Mormon Church--in the year 1788. Early the next year Nathaniel Gorham Jr., son of the purchaser, and a small party of men made their way to the place and the real beginning was made. It grew quite rapidly, for by the time of the census in 1790 the immediate district contained eighty-eight families and 464 inhabitants.²³ This same year there were several other settlements started and the census for the whole Genesee country showed 1075 inhabitants.²⁴ with Canandaigua as the county seat. Canandaigua was thus the capital of this new empire politically, as well as the home of the land office to which all the new immigrants came in their quest of new homes. But this undisputed control from Canandaigua did not continue long, for soon various sections within the large county were asking that they be organized as counties. In 1796 Steuben County was organized, in 1802 Genesee County, Allegany County in 1806, and Chautauque, Chautauque and Niagara Counties in 1808. In spite of these territorial losses the population of Ontario County continued to increase. The population of the county in 1800 was 18,218, in 1810 it was 42,082, and in 1820, 88,267. In 1824 Orleans County was created which made a total of thirteen counties out of the original Ontario County, and these divisions had all taken place in the space of thirty-five years.

But the growth in the Military Tract and other western parts was not less phenomenal. Counties were being divided and redivided there

23. Milliken, History of Ontario Co. p. 49.

24. U. S. Census of 1790.

25. The organization of this county occurred three weeks after the election of George Washington as President of the United States.

in order to keep pace with the influx of population. In order to give an idea of the rapid increase in population in this western section progressive figures will be given of the twenty-seven counties which make up that section at the present time. (Compare the totals of these twenty-seven New York counties with the state of Ohio during the same years).

Western New York		State of Ohio	
1790	1,075	1800	45,365
1800	84,885	1810	227,843
1810	250,666	1820	581,434
1820	516,604	1830	937,903
1830	834,411	1840	1,519,487
1840	1,028,310		

Considering that these twenty-seven counties combined are only about two fifths of the total area of the State of New York the rapid rise in the number of inhabitants is remarkable. The growth of the State of Ohio, which in 1820 ranked fifth in the union, is usually used to illustrate the tremendous rush of immigrants westward. It will be noted that Western New York was practically keeping pace with it.

As would be expected there was a development in other lines in keeping with the increase in population. All sorts of industrial plants sprung up as if by magic, there being an abundance of the necessary raw materials and water power. It was not many years until this section of the state was so important economically as to wield a tremendous influence in the state, and the growth of Albany and New York City are due, in large measure, to the strategic locations they occupied in relation to the commerce of this new section.

Fine homes soon supplanted the log cabins of the first settlers, and even as early as 1735 Dudley Daltonstall wrote his father in Connecticut that "Canandaigua contains sixty houses, more elegant in their

structure than those of any village I know in Connecticut, Hithfield excepted".²⁶ In 1824 Mr. Spafford (who before had belittled the towns of Western New York) reported that in point of beauty and elegance of position, as well as in the style of its buildings, Canandaigua is excelled by no place of the same extent in the United States."²⁷

The Smiths who came into Ontario County in 1815 cannot be thought of as pioneers in the sense of conquering a new country, as the country was well past what might be considered the colonization period. Palmyra, the town to which they came, was only 13 miles from Canandaigua and had then been settled for twenty-five years. In speaking of this section, Lois K. Guthrie says, "After 1811 the interest in settlement centers elsewhere; 'the west' now moved on into western Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. The overflow still carried settlers to New York and Pennsylvania, but the process was now one of filling in states whose organization was perfected, and their institutions no longer in the formative stage".²⁸

Conditions were, of course, not like those on the Atlantic seaboard. It takes time to build up stable institutions and some of the handicaps that go with settling a new country are not overcome in a quarter of a century, and sometimes are not overcome in an entire century. The frontier sections always lack institutional stability and conventionalities which only time will remedy. The tremendous rapidity of the growth in population tended to produce an unstable society, since institutions were unable to keep pace.

It has been a common custom to attempt to explain the rise of Mormonism and several of the other sects which arose in this section by the general conclusion that the country was largely responsible for producing

26. Elliken. p. 271

27. Ibid. p. 272.

28. The Expansion of New England. p. 168.

these phenomena. Siley, in dealing with the "Founder of Mormonism", shows the country in a very primitive condition, and maintains that fact helps to explain the actions of Joseph Smith.²⁹ He says that the country when the Smiths entered in 1815 was by no means settled; that they had to burn their farm out of the woods; that Rochester had only three houses, and that only two years before, the Indians had desolated the whole Niagara frontier. These few statements tend to give a wrong picture of the actual condition. Ontario County, in which the Smiths settled had 42,032 inhabitants in 1810 and 88,267 in 1820. Palmyra, the town in which they first settled had been founded for over twenty-five years and was only 13 miles from the important town of Canandaigua. The Indian depredations of which he speaks were the outgrowth of the War of 1812. The British, with the aid of the Indians, captured the towns along the Niagara frontier and then allowed the Indians to plunder them.

W. A. Lynn, who wrote about the same time as Siley, draws a very different picture and states that though the section was spoken of as being 'out West', the population of Ontario County has hardly changed from the year 1830 to the present time.³⁰

Our study thus far seems to indicate nothing very unusual about Western New York. Pioneer life does not appear to have been more rigorous than in other new sections. On the contrary, there seem to have been very few sections settled with so little hardship and difficulty. Economic and social conditions do not seem to have been abnormal when compared with other frontier communities. It is true that agriculture suffered in the year 1812 and following, and the distress caused by lack

29. Siley, *The Founder of Mormonism*. pp. 39-42

30. Lynn, *Story of the Mormons*. p. 11.

of market and in some instances by failure of crops was considerable, but this distress was no local condition and did not pick out Western New York especially. The increase of population was probably more intense here than in almost any section, and that alone seems to be the only unusual condition that might point to this section as a likely seed-bed for unusual movements.

CHAPTER II

THE FRONTIER CHURCHES OF THE 20'S AND 30'S.

"The decade and a half following the close of the American Revolution was one of spiritual deadness among all the American Churches It was indeed, 'the period of the lowest ebb-tide of vitality in the history of American Christianity.'¹ Such a condition often follows a war, but there was, in addition to the natural spiritual deadness which follows a war, a movement harboring unbelief, which for a time threatened the very existence of the church.² The condition on the seaboard was alarming enough but it was even worse on the western frontier. It is probably not generally known that the church membership in the colonial period was very small as compared with the unchurched. Sweet,³ estimates the number in Virginia as one in twenty, while in the New England colonies it was about one in four. To add an irreligious wave to a condition already bad gives one an idea of the very few who must have belonged to

1. Sweet, The story of Religion in America. p. 322

2. Ibid. p. 322.

3. Ibid. p. 57.

the church in this post-revolutionary period.

This irreligious condition was somewhat modified by the revivals which swept large sections of the country in the latter years of the 18th and early years of the 19th centuries. The subject of revivals in connection with the camp meeting forms another section of this chapter so will not be treated further here.

Since Western New York was settled quite largely by New Englanders, it follows that most of those who belonged to any church were Congregationalists or Presbyterians. New England had been strongly Congregational in its religion from the first, with the exception of Rhode Island, which would likely be classed as Baptist, though religious liberty was guaranteed to all. For our purpose the Congregational and Presbyterian churches can be treated as a unit because of the close cooperation existing between them during the years following the war. This cooperation had begun earlier but by the year 1801 the 'Plan of Union' was adopted by which they agreed to combine their forces for the needs of the people in the new countries.⁴ Thus the earlier religious influences in Western New York were principally Congregational and Presbyterian.

It is difficult to form a fair estimate of the religious life of these Western New York people during the early years. It is certain that small percentages of them belonged to any church and it is also certain that there were not very many located ministers during the first few years. Hitchkin says that "for some years after the settlement of the country commenced, no minister of the gospel of the Presbyterian or Congregational denominations resided within its boundaries; nor was any church of either of these denominations organized".⁵ This same writer

4. Mads, Source Book for American Church History. p. 422.

5. History of Western New York. p. 27.

described what he supposed to be the first formal organization of any Presbyterian or Congregational church. A Reverend John Smith of Massachusetts was in the territory on business and called the surrounding church members together in Olandigua where they organized a church so that they could administer and partake of the Lords Supper, they deeming it unlawful to do so without a church organization. This happened in 1792 or 1793 and was the only occasion of their meeting together.⁶ Fr. Hatchkin states that there were no records kept of the proceedings but that he had information that there were few present and they were widely scattered. During the latter half of the nineties there were several church organizations effected and by 1801 there were ministers located. "At that period (1801) the Congregational and Presbyterian ministers resident on the territory, did not exceed in number ten or twelve, and the churches were few and small."⁷

One of the first permanent church organizations was effected in 1795 at Palmyra, by Reverend Ira Condit, a missionary under the appointment of the General Assembly. Even before its organization, services seem to have been held by men who had been ruling elders in the church in Southampton, Long Island. These men arrived in May 1792 and the next Lord's day held services which have been continuous to the present time.⁸ Though these first settlers were Presbyterian, and the missionary under the appointment of the General Assembly, the congregation elected to adopt the Congregational form of church government, which it continued until 1807 when it changed to Presbyterian and joined the Presbytery of Geneva.

6. Hotselkie, History of Western New York. p. 28.

7. Ibid, Preface vii.

8. Ibid. p. 375

Because of its particular type of organization the Presbyterian church was better adapted to the frontier work than the Congregational church. For this reason the Presbyterian Church carried on most of the work for the two organizations in the new sections. Presbyteries, the General Assembly, the Congregational associations, and various missionary societies all assisted in sending missionaries into this and other sections of the West. In fact about the only preaching and pastoral care the Presbyterians and Congregationalists had in the new settlements, came as a result of the temporary missionaries sent out from the established religious organizations in the East. These missionaries acted as intendants for a few months during the summer and visited as many of the scattered communities as they could. As are told that the few faithful members in the West were eager to hear these missionaries and would travel considerable distances to be present at appointed meetings.

As soon as communities became large enough to finance a minister they would send East and ask to have one sent to settle there. Usually two or three communities would hire a minister among them, and each pay part of his salary and he would serve part of the time in each community. Sometimes they were successful in effecting a union of the various protestants of a given community, the majority deciding what form of church government should be adopted and who should be employed as minister. As communities grew larger they separated on denominational lines.

Though the Congregational church had more followers in Western New York to begin with, it was soon apparent that because of the policy followed by the 'Plan of Union' the Presbyterians were rapidly forging ahead. Many churches which, by majority of membership, would have been originally Congregational adopted the Presbyterian form of government because of the

advantages which it gave them.⁹

Though Presbyterians and Congregationalists had a large majority in the early period, other churches, especially the Methodists and Baptists were very active and were making important gains. By 1800 there were probably between a thousand and fifteen hundred Methodists in the section.¹⁰ By 1810 the number had increased to about 5,000; in 1820 to about 15,000 and in 1828 to about 27,300.¹¹ The Baptist church had made similar gains showing a membership of only 572 members in 1796, and 48,496 in 1836.¹²

By the time of the entrance of the Smiths into the section, most of the important churches were pretty well established, but the Presbyterians and Congregationalists were by far the most important. Baptists and Methodists came next in order and were numerous enough to be important factors there. Mormon literature mentions frequently the Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists, but gives little hint as to the relative importance of each.

In order to give some idea of the way these churches functioned on the frontier a century ago, a few pages will be devoted to each. A short treatise will also be given of the Disciples church which did not figure in the New York period of the Mormon church but which was important in the Ohio period.

Presbyterians on the Early Frontier

"Of all the American churches at the opening of the national era, the Presbyterian was the most strategically located for an immediate

9. Sweet, *Story of Religion*. p. 338.

10. Peck, *Early Methodism*. p. 173.

11. *Ibid.* p. 472. These figures are only approximate. The conference and districts extended into Canada and Pennsylvania and it is hard to get the numbers correct.

12. Peck, John "A historical sketch of Baptists...in Central and Western N. Y." p. 167, 176.

advance into the West.¹² They possessed a splendidly trained leadership which was American born and educated; they had been American patriots and were considered especially typical of all that was American. Their church population was already on the frontier from New York to North Carolina. Coupled with these advantages they possessed an organization with enough strength to send missionaries into the new sections to look after members until conditions should be sufficiently stabilized to settle ministers there. But in spite of these advantages they were to play a less conspicuous part in the frontier life of America than either the Baptists or the Methodists, the reasons of which will become clear in the following pages.

In organization, as already stated, the Presbyterians were strong and somewhat centralized. They did not possess the centralization of the Methodist church, which will be discussed in another section, but they had many advantages in organization which the Congregational bodies did not possess. The Presbyteries, which were composed of three or more churches had considerable authority over the individual churches having the right to pass on the eligibility of the candidate for the Pastorate and to examine the records of the local church. The Presbyter was composed of one minister and one lay elder from each congregation, one of this number being elected moderator for the year. The Synod was made up of representatives from the Presbyteries, one of whom was elected as moderator for the year. The Synod's duty was to examine the books of the Presbyteries which constituted the Synod. The General Assembly was composed of delegates sent by the Presbyteries and met annually as the legislative body of the church. It was presided over by a moderator who was elected annually and held office until the next meeting. From Presbyteries, Synods, and from the General Assembly missionaries were sent into

12. Sweet, The Story of Religion in America, p. 305.

the new countries for short terms to render what religious aid they could. Thus this type of organization possessed an advantage over the Congregational form which depended either upon the individual congregation to do such work or at the best on an association which lacked the power of the Presbyterian institutions.

Perhaps the chief element of weakness of the system was the slowness with which regular ministers came and settled in the new country. They lacked the highly developed itinerant system of the circuit rider of the Methodists, the minister seldom serving more than three congregations. Because of the cost of maintaining the minister the country had to be quite well settled before settled pastors could be paid. As will be shown later the Baptists overcame this obstacle by having unpaid farmer-preachers who looked after the congregations. Had the Presbyterians been able to adjust to this condition there seems to be no good reason why they could not have more successfully competed with the Methodists and Baptists.

The Presbyterians were strict Calvinists and resisted every attempt to change their doctrines or polity to meet the constantly changing needs of the new country. It was a time of democratic ideas and there was the trend to more liberal ideas in theology, to which the Congregational church was sensitive, but the Presbyterian church made no concessions. This likely cost it many members and later large factional divisions.

"The Presbyterians and Congregationalists made the largest contributions to the educational and cultural life of the frontier, though they did not succeed in gaining large numbers for their churches."¹⁴ New England and New Jersey colleges had turned out large numbers of splendidly trained ministers who exerted a very wholesome effect where-

14. Sweet, Story of Religion. p. 311.

ver they went. They were not only ministers of the gospel, "but practical men of affairs and were servicable to the settlers in business as well as spiritual affairs."¹⁵ This right type of training was in some instances an actual handicap to the minister of the frontier because it was apt to make him a little undemocratic, which the westerners would be quick to resent, and then it was not intellectualism, that the West held in highest demand, but emotionalism.

Baptists on the Frontier

The Baptist church, which is one of the two largest protestant bodies in America, has risen to that position only after one of the most prolonged struggles in the history of persecuted religions. Appearing in Europe during the period of the Reformation, they were persecuted not only by the Roman Catholic church as a part of the great protestant movement, but also by the other protestant groups as fanatics, heretics and undesirable. Thus bearing the double persecution of both Catholics and Protestants their lot has been one of extreme hardship and untold sacrifice.

For now the situation much improved for those who came to America. The story of the treatment of those holding Baptist principles in New England is too well known to need more than mentioning. The Puritans, who had come to America, not for religious toleration or religious liberty, but to find a place where they could worship God as they desired, saw great danger in the principles of these 'fanatics'. Perhaps the views of the Baptists which were considered especially dangerous would be given under two general headings: (1) They stood for complete religious liberty, and (2) they believed in the doctrine of regeneration.

15. E. A. Smith, Pioneer Times. p. 41.

From the idea of complete religious liberty several points of importance and controversy arose. There would have to be a complete separation of church and state, and the state could not meddle in the affairs of the church. Five of the original colonies had established churches, three Congregational, and six Episcopalian. To advocate the equal rights of all churches in these colonies was a dangerous thing to do, and brought persecution and banishment to its advocates.

But the Baptists never gave up the fight regardless of the harsh methods used to quiet them, until complete disestablishment had come and religious liberty had been guaranteed to all. Final success was not assured until after the Revolutionary War when one by one the states succumbed to the wide spread clamor for religious liberty, the last and most stubbornly fought battle ending with the victory in Massachusetts in 1833.

The doctrine of regeneration as a pre-requisite to baptism virtually declared null and void the baptisms of all other Christian churches since infant baptism was practiced by most of them. This belief held by the earliest Baptists had given them their name, 'Anabaptists' (i.e., to baptize again), a name given in derision, since they re-baptized even those who had been previously baptised in the other churches. They declared immersion to be the only proper mode of baptism as well.

Since Baptists came in conflict with the civil officers in their resistance to the favors shown the established churches, they were thought of as non-lawabiding. They persisted in holding meetings and doing other things in violation of the laws in several of the colonies. Before the Revolutionary War the Baptist church can hardly be thought of as a legal church, except in Rhode Island where religious liberty was granted to all, and in a few other colonies where they were tolerated. During the war concessions were made to them to secure their aid in the interest of the

American cause, and chaplains of that faith were allowed to accompany troops made up almost entirely of Baptists. Thus at the close of the war their contribution had been such that they were held in a more favorable light.

When dis-establishment and religious liberty had come about, with Baptists as the leaders in the movement, their contribution was further recognized and they were well on their way to become one of the great popular churches of America. But the greatest development and expansion came to them in their ability to supply the religious needs of the frontiersmen in the great movement west following the Revolution.

The key to the Baptist success on the frontier was its unpaid farmer-preacher. "The typical Baptist preacher on the frontier was a settler who worked on his land five or six days each week, except when called upon to hold week-day meetings or funerals. He was generally without much formal education, for there was a deep-seated prejudice against educated and salaried ministers, though some of the preachers received some support as early as the early days was paid in kind."¹⁶ In contrast to the Presbyterian church which refused to ordain men to the ministry to did not come up to a standard in educational qualifications, the Baptists did not stress the importance of college training. Anyone who showed some promise of ability in speaking was asked to 'exercise his gifts', and if his attempts at speaking were pleasing to the congregation he would be given a license to preach. This did not qualify him to administer the sacraments of the church. But if after some experience in preaching he showed sufficient ability he might be called by some church to be its preacher and would then be ordained.

This method made it much easier for the Baptists to get preachers to

16. Sweet, The Story of Religion. p. 314.

care for the frontier congregations that it was for the Presbyterians. The preacher often moved west with the settlers, but even if no preacher moved, the congregation could soon find one among themselves. The Baptists were congregational in government and had the power to appoint their preachers without getting the sanction of a higher body. However, there was a good deal of itinerant work done by the preachers. John Taylor, one of these early preachers describes the dangers and hardships to which one of the early preachers was exposed.¹⁷ Their work was similar to that of the circuit riders of the Methodists which will be described in the next section.

The pay of the preacher was often nothing, but usually some little help was given in kind, such as farm produce, clothing, whiskey, and occasionally small sums of money. John Taylor says, "It never set well on my feelings to receive pay for preaching",¹⁸ though he does tell of receiving help "with pleasure and gratitude".¹⁹

Churches were usually organized under the direction of a licensed or ordained farmer-preacher settled in the district. These were usually small, from six to ten members being the ordinary number. Of course there were many who met with them who were not members. In order for a person to be admitted to the church he had to be able to relate a 'religious experience'. It was much more difficult to get into the church in those days than it was to get out. After the church had been formed "they held business meetings each month with the minister as moderator, and a large share of the business had to do with disciplining of members. A random turning of the

17. Taylor, History of the Ten Churches. p. 18-33

18. Taylor, History of the Ten Churches. p. 33

19. Ibid. p. 10.

pages of any of the old record books of the early frontier churches will soon convince one that the church was a large factor in maintaining order in these raw communities. Discipline was meted out to members for drinking, fighting, harmful gossip, lying, stealing, immoral relation between sexes, gambling, and horse racing. Even business dealings and intimate family affairs, such as the relation between parents and children, were considered matters for church discipline.²⁰

In doctrine the Baptists were Calvinistic, though not so extreme as the Presbyterians. But to be tainted with Arminianism was perhaps one of the worst things that could happen to one, especially in the eyes of the orthodox member. John Taylor tells of one, Judge Davidge, who wrote a pamphlet "in which Arminian doctrine was strained to its utmost link", and of his (i.e., Taylor's) bringing up the matter before the preacher, and when he refused to do anything about it, he referred the matter to the Church. This was not acted upon immediately but Taylor would not let the matter rest until the Church had taken a vote disapproving of the doctrine set forth in the book. The Judge thought he had not been fairly treated, "obtained a letter of dismission from the Church, and has never joined any religious society since".²¹ But there was a division of opinion on the question of Arminianism and many were far from being strictly Calvinists.

As stated above, the Baptists taught baptism by immersion as the only true mode, and refused to recognize the validity of infant baptism. This and the practice of closed communion made it difficult for them to work in harmony with the frontier churches. Peter Cartwright, an early Metho-

20. Sweet, *Story of Religion*. p. 315

21. Taylor, *History of the Ten Churches*. p. 129f.

dist preacher, in commenting on the Baptist's insistence on immersion says, "They made so much ado about baptism by immersion, that the unlearned would suppose that heaven was an island, and there was no way to get there but by diving or swimming".²²

The Methodists on the Frontier

The Methodists were the last of the three great popular churches to gain a foothold in America. Though their founder, John Wesley, had organized his first class in London, in 1739, the church did not gain a large following in America until after the Revolution. During the crisis leading up to the War and during the period of the War, Wesley criticised the acts of the colonies. This made Methodism very unpopular among the colonial patriots, and all the preachers sent to America by Wesley, withdrew during the period of the war except Francis Ashbury, who may be considered the real father of Methodism in America. But Methodism did not deteriorate because of the withdrawal of the English preachers. American preachers took up the work and there was actually an increase of Methodists during the War.²³

The Methodist Episcopal Church dates from the Christmas Conference which met in Baltimore in December 1784.²⁴ At that time the church contained about fifteen thousand members in all America. But the growth following this organization was rapid, and can be explained largely in terms of the policy adopted by the Methodists at that time. Following a plan which had been devised by Wesley in England and called the 'circuit system',

22. Cartwright, A Biography. p. 71.

23. In 1773 there were 1,166 Methodists in the colonies, and in 1794, 14,698.

24. Sweet, Rise of Methodism in the West. p. 11.

these people were able to follow the pioneer into the new West and take care of his needs better than any of the churches of the time. Many church people who immigrated west had to wait until there were communities of sufficient size to support ministers before they had any regular preaching and pastoral care. The Methodists on the other hand did not have to wait for their preachers but found them on the ground almost before they had made a permanent camp. Instead of the Methodists having to go for a preacher, the preacher came to the people. The system of organization provided by the Methodists for the frontier may be briefly described as follows:

1. The Circuit

The circuit was composed of a large number of frontier communities and individual houses scattered along the banks of a stream or of a number of streams. This was the smallest official division of the church and was cared for by a Circuit Rider who was expected to visit all of these communities and houses where anyone claimed membership or would listen to him. It usually required from four to six weeks to visit all these 'points' of the Circuits. The Circuit Rider preached each day with the exception of Monday, and stopped wherever night found him. Because of this arrangement practically all Methodists were able to hear sermons preached at least once in six weeks by a minister of their faith. While the Circuit Rider was absent from a given community on the Circuit the members were looked after by a Class Leader who was authorized to call the members together regularly on Sundays for 'class' and on a week night for prayer-meeting. Local preachers were also active in the different communities. They were given exhorters licenses or local preachers licenses after they had shown their abilities and worth, and then perhaps in time they were ordained. This was the most workable plan devised by any of the

churches in dealing with the frontier. By this plan ministers came in contact with the class leader each week, with the local preacher perhaps once or twice a month, and with the circuit rider about once a month. This system of itinerant preaching made the cost of maintaining a minister very slight since he was able to minister to so large a territory, and probably was the most important item of the success of Methodism on the frontier. Circuit riders were not left without regular conferences. Superintendents

2. The District

The District was the next geographical division, and was composed of several circuits. The District was presided over by a Presiding Elder, who held much the same relation to the District as the Circuit rider to the circuit. It was his duty to hold quarterly meetings in each of the circuits. He was in the saddle quite as much as the Circuit rider himself. These quarterly conferences were important events in the lives of the frontier Methodists, and people came from great distances to attend. This also served to give the people one more contact in connection with the ones listed in the previous article.

3. The Annual Conference

The Conference was the largest unit of territory and was composed of several districts. It was presided over by one of the Bishops who are the highest officials in the Methodist church. The Bishop held Annual Conference in each of the Conferences over which he presided.

4. The General Conference

The general conference is the law making body of the Methodist church. Delegates to this important gathering are elected at the annual conferences preceding the convening of the General Conference which meets every fourth year.

The Methodists were especially insistent on order and obedience in the church. The higher officials expected those under them to render obedience and respect.²⁵ The very complete organization coupled with the doctrine of obedience to those who were higher in authority would give the impression that the Methodists were an autocratic church. On the governmental side this was true, but they taught a very democratic gospel. They "preached a gospel of free grace, free will and individual responsibility. They brought home to pioneers that they were the masters of their own destiny, as opposed to the Presbyterian and Baptist doctrine of predestination and fore-ordination. Methodist theology thus fitted in exactly with the new democracy rising in the West, for both emphasized actual equality among all men."²⁶

In harmony with frontier conditions, the places of meeting were anything but ideal. In the earlier period the homes of the members were frequently used and if they were not large enough to accommodate the crowd, the out-of-doors was used if the weather permitted. "Thus on the Muskingum Circuit in 1828 there were twenty-three preaching places and twenty-one of

25. Sweet, The Story of Religions in America. p. 344. Similarities will be seen in the Methodist and Mormon Organizations. The emphasis on law, order and obedience are very similar. An analysis of this will be made in the next chapter.

26. Sweet, Rise of Methodism in the West. p. 14.

them were the basis of the people, while two were college....."27

The preacher seemed to fit into these surroundings admirably. In the earlier periods none of them were college men, or trained for their particular work except by experience.²⁸ College training probably was of no particular advantage under the conditions, and in some cases proved to be an actual handicap.²⁹ Peter Cartwright, one of the early itinerants of the Methodists in the West, probably expressed the prevailing opinion of the Methodist preacher of the time regarding the college graduate in this statement. "I do not wish to undervalue education, but really I have seen so many of those educated preachers who forcibly reminded me of lettuce growing under the shade of a peach-tree; or like a gosling that had got the straddles by wading in the dew, that I turn away sick and faint. Now this educated ministry and theological training are no longer an experiment, other denominations have tried them and they have proved a perfect failure....."³⁰

But in spite of their lack of education they proved to be good preachers of the emotional type, and many of the men of that period have left testimonials to the effectiveness of their work. Their preaching was entirely extemporaneous, and dealt largely with future rewards and punishments. Since their appeal was so largely emotional, a minister who used a manuscript was at a very great disadvantage. An incident is related by Peter Cartwright of meeting one of the Congregational missionaries who used a manuscript in delivering his sermon. Cartwright's opinion probably quite correctly sums up the opinion of the early frontier people when he writes,

27. Sweet, Circuit Rider Days along the Ohio. p. 56, who quotes from Stewart. p. 127.

28. Sweet, Our American Churches. p. 42.

29. Sweet, Circuit Rider Days in Indiana. pp. 76, 77.

30. Cartwright, The Backwoods Preacher. p. 39.

"I told him to quit reading his old manuscript sermons and learn to speak extemporaneously; that the western people were hard and resolute in hard times and were outspoken and efficient people; that if he did not adopt this manner of preaching the Methodists would set the whole Western world on fire before he could light a match."³¹

The preacher was supposed to receive a salary for his labors since he spent all his time in the ministry. But these salaries were usually insufficient even when paid in full, a condition rarely attained.³² Because of the extreme poverty of the ministers and the fact that they were away on the circuit most of the time, they were encouraged not to marry until they had been on the circuit a number of years, and when married they were advised to settle. It was some time before any provisions were made in their salaries for wife and children.

In morals the Methodists were very strict. This was shown in the hearty way in which they espoused the temperance idea,³³ and the vigorous way they opposed all vices and innovations of any sort that gave promise of leading to looseness or excesses. Extreme plainness was enjoined in dress, instrumental music of any kind was forbidden in the churches, and violin music was considered especially evil since it was intimately as-

31. Bartwright, *The Backwoods Preacher*, quoted in Sweet, *Our American Churches*. pp. 41, 42.

32. Sweet, *Rise of Methodism in the West*. p. 46. "The amount of salary allowed each preacher from 1754 to 1800 was \$64. (quarterly) according to provisions of the discipline. In 1782 traveling expenses were added to this sum. From 1800 to 1816 the salary allowed the traveling preachers was raised to \$80. and traveling expenses; the same allowance was also made the wives of traveling preachers, while children up to seven years were allowed \$16. each and \$24. from the age of seven to fourteen. In 1816 the salary was raised to \$100. This salary was uniform for Bishops, Presiding Elders and Circuit Riders.

33. Sweet, *The Rise of Methodism in the West*. p. 62.

associated with dancing which was completely illegal.³⁴ Ministers were sometimes reprimanded in church by having their names mentioned and their acts denounced, and the 'class' was used especially to interrogate all members of the church to see if their actions were in keeping with the standards set up by the church.

A great deal of use was made of hymns in the meetings which was, without doubt, one of the secrets of the interest manifested in their meetings. Very often there was only one song book in the audience, but this did not lessen the singing done. The songs were largely sectional, and those composed on the frontier were lacking in poetic excellence.

When compared with the other frontier churches of this period, the methodists would be noticed for their centralization, their thorough and detailed organization, and an evangelical zeal on the part of their preachers which was seldom been equaled except in times of great revivals.

Disciples of Christ (Jacobellites)

In a short summary of the prominent frontier churches it may appear odd that the Disciples should be included, while several churches much larger and better known are entirely omitted. It is not because of its size or its importance at that time that we are giving a short history of it, but because of its close connection with the Mormon church in its development in Ohio.

The Disciples have their beginning to two men, Thomas Campbell and his son, Alexander. The elder Campbell came to America from North Ireland in 1807 on the advice of his physicians, and the son followed two years later. "They were Scotch-Irish Anti-Burgher Presbyterians, the most conservative of all the Presbyterian bodies", but liberalizing tendencies were

34. Cartwright, *The Backwoods Preacher*, pp. 35, 36, 37, 48, 61.

coming into their lives. Upon his arrival in America, the father settled as a Presbyterian minister in southwestern Pennsylvania, where he soon clashed with the authorities of the Presbytery because he was in the habit of admitting all Presbyterians who were without pastoral care to join him in partaking of the sacrament. He was given a condemnatory vote by the Presbytery and appealed to the Synod where he was upheld, but because of the hostility shown toward him he decided to withdraw entirely. He did not cease preaching, however, and his friends came to hear him as he held meetings in barns, groves, and houses, until his followers expressed a desire to form some kind of an organization. Campbell was opposed to divisions among the Christian churches, and it was not in his mind to form another church, but he thought that by withdrawing and following closely the scriptures, from which he felt that the sectarian churches had departed, and by avoiding all sectarian names which would indicate that the church had been founded by any individual, that a union of all Christian groups could be brought about. With this idea in view he and his group met August 7th, 1808, and "resolved to form themselves into a regular association under the name of 'The Christian Association of Washington'. They appointed twenty-one of their number to draw up articles of association, with Mr. Campbell as adviser in chief. He drew up what he called a 'Declaration and Address', setting forth the principles upon which they should act, and the reason for the new association. This document was read at a special meeting of the chief members, adopted and ordered printed September 7th, 1808".³⁵

From the acceptance of the Declaration and Address, may properly be dated the beginning of the Disciples church, though they were yet to join

35. Cates, The Early Relation and Separation of Baptists and Disciples.
p. 13.

with, and then separate from, the Baptist church.

The Declaration and Address is of interest in connection with the study of the rise of Mormonism because it shows clearly the similarity of the notions held by Thomas Campbell and those later set forth by Joseph Smith. Campbell felt that the Christian churches had departed from the word of God as contained in the Bible, and it was his desire to return to "the original standard, taking the divine Word alone for our rule, the Holy Spirit for our teacher and guide to lead us into all truth, and Christ alone, as exhibited in the Word, for our salvation".³⁶

Joseph Smith also stated that the Christian churches had departed from the true path; they "were teaching for doctrines the commandments of men", they "had transgressed the law, changed the ordinances and broken the everlasting covenants", and "their creeds were an abomination in the sight of the Lord". But Joseph Smith did not propose to remedy it by the simple expedient of correcting the errors through a return to the teachings of the Word. He acted under direction of heavenly messengers who instructed him as to the way to proceed, and it was his avowed purpose to establish the Church of Jesus Christ, from which all people had departed. As stated above, Campbell did not think of his movement as in any sense a church, "but merely as voluntary advocates for church reform".

It was in the midst of these events in the formation of the association that the son, Alexander Campbell, arrived. It was soon apparent that he was in complete sympathy with his father's ideas and work, and that he possessed ability and energy with which to push it to success. As the association developed it began to "dawn upon the Campbells that they were becoming another sect among the sects, and to stand in the ridiculous light of pleading for the destruction of sectarianism". In 1810 negotiations were

36. Ibid. p. 13.

made with the Presbyterian Synod of Pittsburg to be taken into that body, but they were refused admission. They now organized themselves into the Bush Run Church with Thomas Campbell appointed as Elder and Alexander appointed to preach. Following this there were important discussions regarding baptism, and when immersion was accepted and infant baptism entirely rejected, the Baptists of the section invited them to join them. Although there were some differences they accepted, and from 1813 to 1830 the followers of the Campbells were at least nominal Baptists.

But this union could not continue long because they had not been able to 'restore the ancient order of things', which was the important part of the movement. By 1830 the movement away from the Baptists had become so complete that it was apparent that instead of uniting the Christian churches they had made one more sect.

Revivals and Camp Meetings

By the close of the Revolution revivalism had become almost an established American institution. The Great Awakening (1734-1743) which had so stirred the New England and Middle Colonies, spread by degrees into the South where three different phases of it under the Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists carried thousands into these dissenting churches and kept revivalism alive even during the Revolutionary war. But for a number of years following the war there appeared little sign of life of the evangelical movements. The fire had not gone out, however, but was smouldering ready to blaze forth when proper conditions presented themselves.

The first signs of its return were noticed in the East where church membership began to increase, and there was a gradual increase in the interest shown in religious affairs. Colleges, such as Yale, which had shown an especial lack of interest in religion began to show gains in those belonging

to churches and those interested in religious work. The movements which were of the quiet sort in the East appeared in a very different and extreme way in the West, where it was "attended by such excitement and by such strange manifestations as were never before seen in America."³⁷

The Western phase of the revival centered in Kentucky and adjoining states, and reached its height at the close of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries. While this revival has but slight importance for our study, a brief account of it will be given in order to compare revivalism in Western New York with it. The revival was inspired quite largely by a Presbyterian preacher, James McGready, of Scotch Irish parentage. As it progressed other ministers figured prominently in the work, and Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists participated.

But it is only in regard to the extravagant phases of the revival that we will deal here. McGready had been threatened and driven out of South Carolina, where he was accused of 'running the people distracted'. "A friend of McGready said of him that he could so array hell before the wicked that they would tremble and quake, imagining a lake of fire and brimstone yawning to overwhelm them and the hand of the Almighty thrusting them down the horrible abyss".³⁸ There was unusual excitement in the meetings which filled some of the ministers present "with amazement and others with resentment". But those opposed to the unusual happenings were powerless to arrest the movement. Perhaps the most extreme forms of the revival occurred in the camp meeting, an institution which probably had its origin here at this time.³⁹ These meetings were in some instances very large and were variously estimated as containing from ten thousand to twenty-five thousand.⁴⁰

37. Sweet, The Story of Religions in America. p. 327.

38. Quoted by Davisport in, Primitive Traits. p. 67.

39. Sweet, The Story of Religions in America. p. 329.

40. Ibid, Quoted. p. 330.

Ministers from all the various churches were at liberty to be present and take part in the revival activities. All about the grounds there could be seen groups addressed by ministers and evangelists, the people listening to which minister they might fancy. The ministers had a great deal of power over the people due to the particular emotional condition of those present, and it did not require a great deal of skill to obtain the particular results which followed.⁴¹

Perhaps the most sensational phenomena of these revivals were the bodily exercises which manifested themselves in falling to the ground, jerking, barking, dancing, etc. "In the revival of 1800 falling became so common that it became necessary to remove those who fell to a place of safety where they would not be trampled upon."⁴² At Cain Ridge there were thousands fell at the meetings.⁴³ "Imagine a group of persons gathered together for worship and someone in the midst of the spirited singing or earnest exhortation suddenly uttering a piercing shriek and falling to the floor. Immediately others in all parts of the room would follow the example set, and many would lie prostrate. At a meeting held at Cabin Creek the latter part of May, 1801, the falling, crying out, praying, exhorting, singing, shouting, etc., were so general that few could escape without being affected."⁴⁴ Those who were overcome remained in this condition from a few minutes to a few hours, though in some instances it was many hours before the individual became normal.⁴⁵ "Falling down came to be a regular feature of the revival meetings, and it was customary to estimate

41. Davenport, *Primitive Traits*. p. 63f.

42. Cleveland, *The Great Revival in the West*. p. 88.

43. *Ibid.* p. 89.

44. Cleveland, *The Great Revival in the West*. p. 89.

45. *Ibid.* p. 91.

the success of the meetings by the number who were affected in that manner."⁴⁶

Sometime after the beginning of the revival the 'jerks' made their appearance. At first the forearms would jerk but later any and all muscles of the body contributed their share to the jerking movements. Those who were in sympathy with the meetings as well as those who were opposed to them were affected by the jerks. "A Presbyterian clergyman, hearing that a neighboring congregation was afflicted with the exercise, went to remonstrate with them. He was seized himself while addressing them, and upon returning home communicated the salady to his own people which had assembled to hear the report of his visit."⁴⁷

Peter Cartwright tells of rowdies coming to break up his meetings and contracting the jerks so violently that they were powerless to even help themselves. One man especially who had reviled both the jerks and religion came up to the meeting with a bottle of whiskey and made threatening remarks. The jerks caught him and he started to run. "He halted among some saplings, took out his bottle of whiskey and swore he would drink the damned jerks to death. At this he became greatly enraged, fetched a very violent jerk, snapped his neck, fell and soon expired with his mouth full of cursing and bitterness."⁴⁸ The same writer also described another class of people affected by the jerks. He says, "to see these proud young gentlemen and young ladies dressed in their silks, jewelry, and primella, from top to toe take the jerks would often excite my risibilities. The first jerk or so you would see their fine bonnets, caps and combs fly and so sudden would be the jerking of the head that their long loose hair would crack almost as loud as a waggoner's whip".⁴⁹ As many as

46. Ibid. p. 98.

47. Ibid. p. 99.

48. Cartwright, The Backwoods Preacher. p. 80, 81.

49. Ibid. p. 101.

As many as five-hundred would be jerking at one time in some of the meetings.⁵⁰

"Closely connected with the jerks was an experience called barking. Short guttural sounds similar to the barking of a dog often proceeded from those affected with jerking."⁵¹ "A minister in lower Kentucky stated that, 'it was common to hear people barking like a flock of sheep on their way to meeting.....There they would start up suddenly in a fit of barking, rush out, roam around, and in a short time come barking and foaming back. Down on all fours they sometimes went, growling, snapping their teeth, and barking just like dogs.'⁵²

Dancing became quite common in some of the meetings, even the ministers in certain cases participating. John Thompson a Presbyterian minister danced at the close of one of the meetings, and continued for an hour, exclaiming, "This is the Holy Ghost, -- Glory."⁵³ Many of those indulging in the dancing thought it would aid in keeping from more undesirable bodily exercises. "Other exercises appeared in many congregations, sometimes the one affected would roll over and over like a wheel, regardless of a chance mud puddle or other obstacles that might happen to be in the way. Others would run with amazing swiftness, leaping over obstructions in the path."⁵⁴

Apology should be made for mentioning only the unpleasant side of the revival meetings, because they had a much brighter side, but the purpose here is not to describe the revival of 1797-1805, but to give this

50. Cleveland, *The Great Revival in the West*. p. 100

51. *Ibid.* p. 101.

52. Benedict, *A History of the Baptist Denomination in America*, II, p. 256. Quoted by Cleveland.

53. McNemar, *The Kentucky Revival*. p. 63.

54. Cleveland, *The Great Revival in the West*. p. 103.

one-sided picture so that the revival in Western New York can be compared to it.⁵⁵

Many writers have endeavored to explain Mormonism largely on the basis of the revival movements in Western New York during the twenties and thirties. Thus Davenport, in speaking of this section says, "Of course it is generally known that Mormonism had its beginning in this region, but it is not so generally understood, I think, that Mormonism was literally born and bred in the unhealthy revival atmosphere which has just been described. In fact the sect of so-called Latter-Day Saints might never have existed except for the extraordinary mental agitation about religious matters which pervaded Western New York in this period. Mormonism has two main roots, the one to be traced into the mental and nervous characteristics of the personality of Joseph Smith, Jr., the other into the revival environment in which he lived and moved -- and neither is a sufficient explanation without the other".⁵⁶

Davenport's idea of the condition of Western New York in this period can be gleaned from the following statement: "It is important to notice that for many years during this early period an unbridled revival activity characterized the ordinary religious life of Western New York.this fanatical restlessness, this tendency to spiritual exaltation, was in the mind of the population, and periodically broke forth in fantastic and exciting revivals. There were whole stretches of country in these parts that for generations were known as the 'burnt district', and which Finney found so withered and withered by constant revival flames that no sprout, no blade of spiritual life, could be caused to grow.....I speak of this in the

55. For a splendid description of this revival movement see especially C. C. Cleveland, *The Great Revival in the West*, and bibliography given therein.

56. Davenport, *Primitive Traits*. p. 185.

first place to indicate the primitive character of a large element of the population within the environment of Western New York and its vicinity in the early decades of the nineteenth century....."⁵⁷ Other writers have followed essentially this line of approach.⁵⁸

We are handicapped somewhat for lack of documents on the actual situation in Western New York. Finney, whose Memoirs are used so extensively by both Baymport and Warfield, did not get on the ground early enough to know much of the condition before the latter part of the third decade. Potokkin says that it was in 1826 that he came for the first time into Western New York to assist in a revival in Auburn. Previous to that time he had been active in the Northern and Central part of the state.⁵⁹ James M. Potokkin was a preacher in the country from 1801, and according to his own statement made quite a thorough attempt to get the principal facts regarding the history of this section, which he wrote in 1848. His book was written for the Presbyterian church and takes very little account of the other churches. Warfield, in speaking of Potokkin as authority for this period says that as he is "speaking only of the Presbyterian churches, which suffered least of all the churches from this disease, we are looking through his eyes only at the outer fringes of the evil".⁶⁰ Just why the Presbyterians suffered least of all in this particular section Mr. Warfield does not indicate, but certainly in the Kentucky section and in all preceding revivals where any Presbyterians were involved they were among the most extreme. Their Calvinistic doctrines made the element of fear a terrible

57. *Ibid.* p. 184f.

58. See article by Professor Kenja in H. Warfield, "John Wesley Lyles and his Bible Communists", in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 78, p. 37f. Also Wiley, *The Founder of Mormonism*. Chapters 1, 2.

59. *History of Western New York*. p. 189.

60. Warfield, *John Wesley Lyles and his Bible Communists*, in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 78, p. 47.

instrument in the hands of the Presbyterian minister who desired to use it. The present writer it seems fair to assume that an accurate picture of the condition in the Presbyterian church would be a fair indication of the condition in all the churches. This becomes still more apparent when we consider the dominance of the Presbyterians during the early period with which we are dealing. Hetchkin believed in the value of the revivals and we will need to make some allowance for his enthusiasm for them on that account, but he was one of the old school Presbyterians and would have been one of the first to oppose any innovations.

Assuming that Hetchkin is competent to judge of the condition let us see what sort of picture he gives us. As was stated he did not come into Western New York until 1801. He was, therefore, not on the ground during the revival of 1799. This seems to have been a rather intense revival, but lacking most of the objectionable bodily exercises, and wildness of the Kentucky revival. Rev. Seth Williston says, "The awakening among us is very free from noise and wildness".⁶¹ Quoting further the same author says, "The convictions of sinners have been regular, solemn, and pungent; their conversions calm, rational, and heavenly".⁶² Certainly in 1799 the revival in Western New York was Presbyterian in character and if the ministers of the Congregational and Presbyterian churches there knew of the conditions elsewhere they did not feel that conditions there were bad by comparison.

Hetchkin devotes four chapters (11, 12, 13, 14) to the question of revivals in that section. He attempts to tell of the ingathering of souls of any consequence in all the individual congregations of the section.

61. Quoted in Hetchkin. p. 37, Taken from a letter written to the Editor of the New York Missionary Magazine, April 29, 1799.

62. Ibid.

Then one reads of each of these years and is impressed with the idea that there was an almost unbroken chain of revivals throughout the whole period from 1789 up to the time he wrote his book. This is the position taken by Ingersoll and Warfield as already mentioned. In one sense it is true, for there were additions to the churches in each of these years which are worthy of note. But following the year 1793 the revivals which appeared in individual churches were isolated in character and nothing like a general revival occurred until 1816.

Speaking of the years 1816 and 1817 Hotchkiss says, they "were peculiar years of the right kind of the most high".⁶³ During these years many of the congregations were doubled in membership and it is not at all uncommon to find where two-hundred had united themselves to a given church. But here again we fail to find evidence of the extremes that were so common in the Kentucky revival.

A few typical reports of these revivals read as follows: "In September 1816, it was stated that in Palmyra, a glorious work had commenced, -- that many were rejoicing in hope, while multitudes were inquiring the way of salvation. About 120 hopeful converts were stated on the shores of the Seneca, as a result of the effusion of the Holy Spirit".⁶⁴ "In the autumn of 1817, two leading gamblers and horse-racers were hopelessly converted, and with about forty more individuals, united with the church on profession of faith. These were indeed treasures of rejoicing to the little flock of Ithaca, although yet much open wickedness prevailed around them."⁶⁵

In summing up these two important years of revival activity Hotchkiss says that there was nothing unusual about them. "No new measures were adopted in addition to those which had by the evangelical church been considered

63. History of Western New York. p. 126.

64. Hotchkiss, History of Western New York. p. 130.

65. Ibid. p. 129.

legitimate.....Pastors were assisted at times by neighboring ministers, and vacant churches obtained such assistance as they could; but such an order of ministers as evangelists, or technically called 'revival preachers', whose business it was to go from place to place and 'get up a revival', and, by use of peculiar instrumentalities, effect the conversion of a great many souls, was not then known. The minister who preached the gospel plainly, fully, earnestly, affectionately, and constantly, was a revival preacher, nor was it considered that any novelties were needed to convert souls. This was understood to be the proper office-work of the Holy Spirit. The revivals of this period are believed to have been the genuine work of the Holy Spirit of God; the results on the review bear the most decided testimony as to the character of the work."⁶⁶

Following the years of 1816 and 1817 there was no major revival until 1831 but there were awakenings in many individual churches and some of these were quite important.

The revivals of Western New York were different from those in Kentucky especially in regard to the manner in which people were affected. There was little of the bodily exercises, though they occasionally appeared. The typical agitation was mental and was accompanied by much praying. The ministers urged the people to be "abundant and importunate in prayer, in their individual capacity, for the salvation of souls and the progress of the divine work".⁶⁷ It was believed that the prayers of the Christians of the section were largely responsible for the revivals.⁶⁸ Finney found prayer to be "an indispensable condition of promoting a revival". In telling of one of his converts he says, ".....and what a convert she was.

⁶⁶. Notchkin, History of Western New York. p. 132, 133.

⁶⁷. Ibid. p. 164.

⁶⁸. Ibid.

My wife said that she was one of the most remarkable women in prayer that she ever heard pray; and that she repeated words Scripture that any person she ever heard".⁶⁹

Just what influence these revivals had in relation to the founding and growth of Mormonism is hard to determine. The Smiths came into Western New York just at the proper time to get the benefit of the intense revival of 1816-1817 and Joseph Smith at that time was a lad eleven or twelve years of age. These revivals continued to some extent to the year of 1820 when he made claim of receiving his 'first vision',⁷⁰ and even to the time of the organization of the Church in 1830. The 'conversion' of Joseph Smith came, then, during a time of religious agitation and he was unquestionably greatly influenced by the excitement of the time. He says that all the churches claimed to be the Church of Christ and he went to a grove some distance from his home to inquire of God which of the churches was right and which he should join.⁷¹

But the importance of revivals in the growth and development of the Church can easily be overstated. Western New York where the Church arose did not make large contributions to the membership of the Church. At the time of the removal of the Mormons to Ohio, about a year after the organization, there were probably not more than two hundred, and likely less than that, came there from New York.⁷² Hence the western New York revivals did not furnish very many of the converts to Mormonism. The Ohio section in which they settled was far more responsive to their message. Sidney

69. Finney, Memoirs. p. 74.

70. Joseph Smith's Own Story, History of the Church, Vol. 1, Ch. 1.

71. Ibid.

72. History of the Church. Vol. 1. p. 133. Alonzo Evans, One Hundred Years of Mormonism. p. 127.

sion, a Campbellite minister joined them there and with him came a considerable number from that faith. The followers of Campbell seem to have been especially well prepared for the message of Joseph Smith since they had been taught the desirability of a return to the 'ancient order of things'. The most important thing they had to accept in joining the new faith was Joseph Smith as the Prophet and Pastor of this ancient order.

Converts to early Mormonism came from many states of the Union and from many nations. Its development and growth cannot possibly be explained in terms of a local condition in Western New York. There is no evidence which points to the fact that the Mormon Church benefited out of proportion to the larger protestant churches, from the revival atmosphere of the period. Revival methods in the sense ordinarily thought of were not employed in the missionary enterprise of the Church, and with the exception of one incident in Ohio,⁷³ there were no great emotional displays in the Mormon meetings. This one incident, which Panoast says one could have seen and heard duplicated in a Free Methodist Church in 1810,⁷⁴ occurred when the Prophet and other of the leading Mormons were away, and as soon as the Prophet returned he pronounced the converts of Jewish origin and they came to a halt.⁷⁵

CHAPTER III

DOCTRINES AND PRACTICES

It will be manifestly impossible to deal with all the doctrines and practices of the Mormons during this period, but a few of the most distin-

73. Howe, *Persecution Unveiled*. pp. 104-106; 116.

Panoast, *Mormons at Kirtland*. pp. 33-35.

Fruit, *Autobiography*. p. 65, 66.

74. Panoast, *Mormons at Kirtland*. p. 34.

75. *Doctrine and Covenants* (1844 ed.) Section 17, Verses 1-5.

Panoast, *Mormons at Kirtland*. p. 35.

atives of their tenets will be considered, and an attempt will be made to see to what extent they were current among the Christian churches of the period.

Perhaps the most distinctive belief of the Mormon Church when considered in relation to the Christian churches of the time was its supernaturalism. This belief in the supernatural was the foundation of the whole Mormon structure. Fully half of the Mormon's thirteen articles of faith,¹ deal with items which would be listed as supernatural. We quote those most applicable:

- Article 5. We believe that a man must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands, by those who are in authority, to preach the gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof.
- Article 6. We believe in the same organization that existed in the Primitive church, viz.: apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc.
- Article 7. We believe in the gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healings, interpretation of tongues, etc.
- Article 9. We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the kingdom of God.
- Article 10. We believe in the literal gathering of Israel, and in the restoration of the ten tribes, that Zion will be built upon this continent, that Christ will reign personally upon the earth, and that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisaical glory.

For the purpose of showing the Mormon belief in the supernatural this subject will be discussed under six headings as follows: Prophet Leaders, Visions and Revelations, Prophecies, Healings, Tongues, and Priesthood and Authority.

1. The Articles of Faith can be found in many places in Mormon literature, see especially the book, Articles of Faith by James E. Falgout. This is really the handbook of Mormon doctrine and practice. In many editions.

A.

mormonism was built around a prophetic leader. Joseph Smith was to his followers a prophet of God, who in obedience to the Divine command rejected the churches of the day as the work of men, and established the true church.² He was in almost constant communication with the heavens and when he communicated the will of God to man it was as binding as if God himself had spoken.³ This remarkable leader, through his prophetic utterances not only organized the church and gathered about him numerous loyal followers, but he guided and directed their activities during the first fourteen years of the church's history until his death in 1844. But the Prophet was not alone in this prophetic leadership. Early in the work he called in men to assist him and these men enjoyed a certain degree of the prophetic power, though none of them were blessed with it to the same degree as Joseph Smith. Thus Oliver Cowdery was present with the Prophet when he received the priesthood under the hands of John the Baptist,⁴ and later under the hands of Peter, James, and John.⁵ The three witnesses to the Book of Mormon⁶ were entrusted with the important work of choosing the Twelve Apostles,⁷ and these Twelve when chosen and ordained took over much of the responsibility which the Prophet had previously carried himself. Sidney Rigdon, who joined the church in its first year, became an important official as counselor to Joseph Smith, and enjoyed much of the same power which the prophet enjoyed, though in lesser degree.⁸

2. Tallidge, "Life of Joseph the Prophet". p. 177f

3. Doctrine and Covenants, Section 66, verse 4. Section 1, verse 36.

4. Doctrine and Covenants, Section 13. Also History of the Church, Vol. I P. 39

5. Ibid. Section 124, verse 20; also Section 27. History of the Church, Vol. I, p. 40.

6. Flg leaf of Book of Mormon, All editions.

7. Tallidge, Life of Joseph the Prophet, p. 120. Doctrine and Covenants, Section 18.

8. Doctrine and Covenants, Section 43.

A.

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2. Tullidge, "Life of Joseph the Prophet". p. 177f

3. Doctrine and Covenants, Section 68, verse 4. Section 1, verse 38.

4. Doctrine and Covenants, Section 13. Also History of the Church, Vol. I P. 39

5. Ibid. Section 128, verse 20; also Section 27. History of the Church, Vol. I, p. 40.

6. Fly leaf of Book of Mormon, All editions.

7. Tullidge, Life of Joseph the Prophet, p. 150. Doctrine and Covenants, Section 18.

8. Doctrine and Covenants, Section 43.

Hyrum, an older brother of the Prophet, also became important in the church, and in 1841 was appointed through revelation to be "a prophet and a seer, and a revelator unto my church, as well as my servant Joseph."⁹ It was the custom of the church to sustain Joseph Smith as Prophet, seer and revelator for the church, and to sustain other leading brethren who were associated with him in much the same way.¹⁰ The practice of sustaining the church leaders as Prophets, Seers, and Revelators has continued and is in vogue at the present time.¹¹

B.

Visions and revelations were important in the early days of the church and continued to be during the entire period of the life of the Prophet, and to some extent, though of much less importance, since his death. It was the first vision (1820) that started the Prophet on his career as organizer of the Church.¹² It was the visit of an angel (1823) that was responsible later for the bringing forth of the Book of Mormon.¹³ The power and authority possessed by the Prophet and his colleagues came as a result of the visitation of John the Baptist, and later Peter, James and John.¹⁴ The three witnesses to the Book of Mormon beheld an angel who told them that the book was true, and commanded them to bear testimony of it to the world.¹⁵ Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon beheld in vision the

9. Ibid. Sec. 124, Verse 94.

10. Willard Bigden, Joseph Smith's counselor was sustained as Prophet, Seer, and Revelator.

11. Conference Reports of the General Conferences of the Church. Issued in April and October.

12. History of the Church, Vol. I., p. 5f.

13. Ibid. p. 11f.

14. Willard, Life of Joseph the Prophet. p. 47

History of the Church, Vol. I., p. 39, 40.

15. History of the Church, Vol. I., p. 56f.

Also Testimony of the Three Witnesses, Fly leaf of Book of Mormon.

condition of men after death, and gave to the church the doctrine of the 'Three Degrees of Glory'.¹⁶ Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery received a vision of the Lord and other heavenly messengers in the Kirtland temple at the time of its dedication (1836) and others in attendance at the meetings also saw heavenly messengers.¹⁷

Revelations to the Prophet were more numerous than visions, and others also participated in receiving them. The prominence of revelations given to the Prophet in the early days of the church can best be seen by turning through a volume of the Doctrine and Covenants, which is composed principally of these revelations. Movements of the church were directed by revelations to the Prophet; new doctrines were given and old ones clarified by revelations; and new converts to the faith were accepted, encouraged, and instructed in relation to their duties. Missionaries were sent on missions, temples were constructed, mobs were avoided, and events of the future foretold through revelations.

While others, beside the prophet, could receive revelations, only the Prophet and his successor, in turn, could receive official revelations for the guidance of the church.¹⁸ "The Lord strictly observes the principles of order and propriety in giving revelation to His servants. Though it is the privilege of any person to live so as to merit this gift in the affairs of his special calling, only those appointed and ordained to the offices of presidency are to be revelaters to the people at large".¹⁹

16. Tullidge, Life of Joseph the Prophet. p. 125f.
Doctrine and Covenants, Section 76.

17. Tullidge, Life of Joseph the Prophet. pp. 200-202.
Doc. and Cov. 110.
Essentials in Church History. p. 198.

18. Doc. and Cov., Sections 26, 43.

19. Talmage, Articles of Faith. Article 7, paragraph 20.

C.

Prophecies, while not occupying as prominent a place in the church as has been thought by some, nevertheless, occupied considerable importance in the early period. Here again, the Prophet was the principal, though by no means the only one, who had glimpses into the future and prophesied of things to come. It was made known to him in the visitation of the angel in 1823 that he should be both good and evilly spoken of in all the world. At this time he was less than eighteen years of age, and was scarcely known outside his neighborhood.²⁰ In Illinois the Prophet became acquainted with Judge Stephen A. Douglas, and predicted that Douglas would aspire to the Presidency of the United States, but warned the Judge that if he ever lifted his hand against the Mormon people he would be defeated.²¹ In his campaign for the Presidency, Judge Douglas spoke of the Mormons as a loathsome ulcer, best to be handled by the application of the knife. Judge Douglas was defeated and the Mormons felt that the Almighty had withheld this great honor from him for his betrayal of the Lord's chosen people. In 1832 the Prophet predicted the war of the Rebellion in the United States, and stated that it would begin in South Carolina.²² He is reported to have predicted that the Saints would go to the Rocky Mountains, and there become a mighty people.²³ And just previous to his death, as he was returning to Nauvoo, later to stand trial at Carthage, Illinois, he said that he was going 'like a lamb to the slaughter'.²⁴ Other prominent Mormons also made predictions, one of the best known is that of Heber C. Kimball, who in 1848

20. Follidge, Life of Joseph the Prophet. p. 9
 History of the Church, Vol. I, p. 11.
 Evans, One Hundred Years of Mormonism. p. 40

21. Follidge, Joseph the Prophet, p. 418.

22. Doc. and Cov., Section 87.

23. Follidge, Life of Joseph the Prophet. p. 378

24. Ibid. p. 528.; also Doc. and Cov., Section 136.

predicted that the starving people in Salt Lake Valley would soon have plenty of food and clothing, and that they would be able to buy it cheaper than in New York.²⁵ This prophecy was fulfilled the next year when the gold seekers passed through Salt Lake, and in their haste to reach the coast disposed of their heavy wagons and supplies for lighter ones at tremendous bargains to the Saints in Salt Lake.

D.

The Mormons believe that healing of bodily ills was one of the proper workings of the spirit. The first of these miracles reported in the church was the casting out of a devil from the body of Samuel Knight by the Prophet.²⁶ Another important miracle occurred in Kirtland two years later, when the Prophet was visited by a party of curious individuals, among whom was a Mrs. Johnson, who had an arm so lame that she could not lift it to her head. Among other topics discussed with the Prophet at that time was that of supernatural gifts, and the question was asked if the same gifts of healing as were in the primitive church were on the earth. "A few moments later, when the conversation had turned in another direction, Joseph Smith arose, and walking across the room, taking Mrs. Johnson by the hand, said in a solemn and impressive voice, 'Woman, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I command thee to be whole', and immediately left the room."²⁷ The woman was immediately restored and did a washing the next day.

In the early settlement of Nauvoo, Illinois, there was an epidemic of fever, which was so general that almost no well people were left to look

25. Whitney, *Life of Henry C. Kimball*. p. 401.

Evans, *The Hundred Years of Mormonism*. p. 456.

26. Tullidge, *Life of Joseph the Prophet*. p. 79f.

History of the Church, Vol. I., p. 83.

27. Farnsworth, *The Mormons in Kirtland*. p. 41.

Payden, *Early History of the Disciples*. p. 151-162.

after the sick. Upon this occasion the Prophet, himself sick, and hardly able to be around, arose and went through the settlement administering to the sick, "and all recovered under his hands". Elijah Gordon who "had been lying for an hour" and was so far gone that he could scarcely speak was instantly restored and accompanied the Prophet and his colleagues on the tour of healing. Even non-Mormons were healed, one noted case being that of a pair of twins who were restored by the use of a handkerchief given to Wilford Woodruff, by the Prophet, with the instruction that he wipe the faces of the sick children.²⁸ Instances of healing appear almost without number in the early literature of the church, and undoubtedly this spiritual gift was more frequently used than any other. It has also persisted in more common use than others to the present time, elders being called in frequently to anoint the sick in the Mormon homes at the present time.

B.

The speaking in unknown tongues and the interpretation of tongues were among the spiritual manifestations. Thus at a meeting of John P. Greene and Brigham Young, with the Prophet and others, these men as well as the Prophet spoke in an unknown tongue.²⁹ Brigham Young had previously spoken in tongues and had been told it was of the devil, and he was anxious to know what the Prophet would think of it. After the manifestation in the meeting above mentioned, some of the brethren gathered around the Prophet and asked him what he thought of it. He said it was of God and that Young had spoken in the pure Adamic language.³⁰ "The gift of tongues here spoken

28. Evans, One Hundred Years of Mormonism. p. 238f.

Whitney, Life of Nelson S. Kimball. p. 273f.

29. Smith, Essentials in Church History. p. 161.

30. Millennial Star, Vol. 26, p. 439.

History of the Church, Vol. 1, p. 127. foot note.

or was first exercised in any of the Pennsylvania churches between London and Kirtland; then in Kirtland and under the circumstances above related, and shortly afterwards it was a gift quite generally exercised by the Saints in Ohio.³¹

F.

The Mormons believed that authority from God was necessary before one could baptize or perform other ordinances in His name. They claimed that the Priesthood and authority which Jesus and the Apostles possessed was lost during the early centuries, and that no one on the earth possessed that authority at the time the Prophet received his heavenly manifestation.³² This authority was conferred upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery by John the Baptist, who restored the Lesser (Aaronic) Priesthood,³³ and by Peter, James and John, who restored the Higher (Melchizedek) Priesthood.³⁴ Clothed with this Priesthood, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery organized the church and ordained others to the Priesthood. This Priesthood gave the one possessing it power to cast out devils, and to heal the sick, as well as to administer the saving ordinances of the gospel.

Perhaps this very brief sketch will be sufficient to show the Mormon belief in the supernatural. They felt that the spiritual gifts which were enjoyed by the Apostles of Christ and the early Christians, were again made possible through the restoration of the gospel to Joseph Smith. The fight between the unseen forces of good and evil was as real to them as it was to Paul in the first century, and the power of God, when exercised through His authorized agents, was sufficient to overcome the power of the evil one. A new dispensation, coextensive to the one which Jesus had inaugurated,

31. Ibid. Vol. 1, p. 297. Foot note.

32. Smith, *Essentials in Church History*. p. 6f.

33. *History of the Church*, Vol. I, p. 394

34. Ibid. Vol. I. p. 40. Foot note.

was again upon the earth, the dispensation of the fullness of times.

But the Mormons were not the only ones who laid claim to supernatural endowments and spiritual gifts. It is our purpose now to investigate this phenomena among some of the non-Mormon societies.

During the same period that Mormonism was making its first bid for converts in America, a movement which bears many close resemblances, and which is generally known as Irvingism,³⁵ was making its appearance in England. Irving, who previously had a small following, made his first bid for followers in London in 1822,³⁶ which was two years after Joseph Smith received his first vision, but was eight years before the Mormon Church was organized. He soon rose from obscurity to marked notoriety, and the building he occupied became too small to accommodate the crowds.³⁷ In 1824 he preached in the 'Tabernacle', a building constructed to accommodate the crowds of Whitefield, before a capacity crowd that had gathered hours before the appointed time.³⁸ While he was meeting with approval from the masses, he was opposed by the religious organizations because he was not preaching in orthodox fashion. He felt that there was something lacking in the Christian churches. He said they had the form of Godliness, but denied the power thereof.³⁹ It was the desire to return to apostolic conditions with its Pentecostal outpourings, so as to be prepared to meet the Lord when He came, that gave the movement its impetus. Unlike Joseph Smith, Irving seemed to have had no intention of founding a church, and it was really not until after his death that a formal organization was affected.⁴⁰

35. Edward Irving, the chief personality in the movement was born in Scotland in 1792, and received his education there. The official name of this body of worshipers is The Catholic Apostolic Church.

36. Oliphant, *Life of Edward Irving*. p. 150, Vol. I.

37. *Ibid.* p. 163. 38. *Ibid.* p. 157

39. *Ibid.* Vol. II, p. 39

40. Miller, *The Hist. and Doc. of Irvingism*, Vol. I, p. 2.

In this respect the movement was more like the Disciples than the Mormons, but in its desire to duplicate the experiences of the early Christian church, it was more like the Moravians. It was not until the early thirties that the spiritual gifts were noticeable to any appreciable degree, although for a couple of years they had knowledge of certain spiritual gifts in Scotland, and they had been praying for a revival of the gifts manifested in the Primitive church. "We cried unto the Lord for apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers anointed with the Holy Ghost, the gift of Jesus".⁴¹

Early in 1830 the gifts of tongues and healing made their appearance. Margaret Macdonald, who was so ill that her passing was expected at any time, got the spirit and predicted that the Holy Ghost was to be manifested shortly. Almost immediately her brother James said, "I have got it", and he commanded his sister to "Arise and stand upright". She was immediately made well and ate dinner with the rest. James then wrote a letter to Ray Campbell who was also afflicted and commanded her to be made well, and she was restored to health.⁴² A few days later at a prayer meeting, George, another brother of Margaret Macdonald, together with James, spoke in tongues, "and thus commenced that speaking in tongues which never afterwards wholly ceased".⁴³ Manifestation of spiritual gifts increased rapidly, "taking the form principally of speaking in tongues and prophecy. These manifestations continued, and in 1832, as a result of the 'prophetic revelations', certain men were regarded as called to the office of apostle. Others were added from time to time until, in 1836, twelve in all had been chosen, corresponding to the number of the original apostolate."⁴⁴ Since

41. Oliphant, Life of Edward Irving. Vol. II, p. 187f.

42. Ibid. p. 132f.

Miller, History and Doctrines of Irvingism, Vol. I, p. 84f.

43. Miller, History and Doctrines of Irvingism, Vol. I, p. 57.

44. United States Census of Religious Bodies. 1826. Catholic Apostolic Church. p. 4.

these apostles were not called by the church but by Jesus Christ, through the Holy Ghost, their authority was divine and superior to the priests and ministers of the Presbyterian and Episcopalian churches. Prophets also made their appearance, and spoke under the influence of the Holy Ghost. While anyone so prompted might utter prophecies, only those who had been properly ordained to that calling could properly be called Prophets. They were inferior in authority to the apostles, and their prophecies had to be sanctioned by the apostles before they could be accepted. There were other officers in the church similar to the officers in the Mormon church which will be mentioned in another connection but are not pertinent at this point.

Thus several similarities of the Mormon and Irvingite movements can be readily seen. In both there was the faith in inspired or prophetic leaders, though in the Irvingite movement the inspired leaders appeared after the movement was well under way while in the Mormon movement the Prophet had received the heavenly sanction before he started his work. The priesthood and authority came to Joseph Smith from visible personages while the apostles of the Irvingite movement received theirs from the invisible presence of the Holy Ghost. Both groups of leaders received revelations, gave forth instructions for present guidance, and predicted events of the future. The gifts of healing and of tongues appeared in both churches, the gift of tongues being more pronounced in the Irvingite movement, and that of healing in the Mormon.

With two movements as similar as they seem to be, growing up at almost exactly the same time, one is led to inquire if there was an exchange of ideas. In the absence of sufficient literature on the subject, it is impossible to tell, but it appears likely that each movement grew up independently of the other, and the similarities have to be

accounted for on other bases than through borrowing or exchange of ideas.

Another movement which also bears many resemblances to the Mormon church was the society commonly called Shakers. This group originated in England, though they were somewhat dependent upon the French prophets, some of whom came to England in 1708. Ann Lee, the most important and colorful figure in the movement, was not its originator, she being dependent upon James and Jane Wardley and others, who commenced the society about 1747. Ann Lee joined the movement in 1753 and by her devotion and zeal soon became important, and by 1770 had virtual control, being in that year accepted as the Mother of the group. In 1774 in obedience to a revelation in which God had so commanded, she came to America.⁴⁵ She spent two years in New York City and then settled at Watervliet, near Albany. The groups of Shakers became communalistic and before long had societies in several states, though their members never became great.

In their intensity of belief in the supernatural, Shakers rank very high. James and Jane Wardley had visions and revelations to the effect that the second coming of Christ was near.⁴⁶ They also enjoyed many of the gifts of the spirit. Other leaders in the movement at this early period had like spiritual gifts. But these early visions, revelations, and other manifestations of the spirit were but the opening signs of the great dispensation which was soon to dawn. The Wardleys and others were but John the Baptists for the greater one to come.⁴⁷ With the conversion of Ann Lee, there emerged a soul so purified that she became a fullness of the revelation of God to man. She was the second appearance of Christ upon the earth. As there was a male and a female element in the deity,⁴⁸

45. Youngs, Christ's First and Second Appearing. p. 621

46. Ibid. p. 616.

47. Ibid. p. 617

48. Ibid. p. 503f.

so it was expedient that there be a female appearance of Christ. The realization of this important mission did not come to Ann Lee suddenly but after a struggle of nine years, during which time she "labored in continual watchings and fastings, in tears and incessant cries to God, day and night, for deliverance. And, under the most severe tribulations, and violent temptations, as great as sin was able to resist and endure, such was, frequently, her extreme agony of soul, that blood would issue through the pores of her skin".⁴⁹ But in 1770 she was rewarded for her struggles by the special testimony which "she received in open vision from the Lord Jesus Christ, who appeared plainly, and clearly revealed the true nature and work of the everlasting gospel of salvation to her".⁵⁰

From this time on the gifts of the spirit were multiplied. Speaking in tongues, revelations, prophesying, and all descriptions of miracles became almost daily occurrences. Thus, Mother Ann was delivered out of the hands of a mob, who sought to harm her, by a messenger whom God had inspired to go to her rescue;⁵¹ she was saved from the staves of robbers by special intervention of God, because her work was not yet completed;⁵² she spoke in tongues to the utter confusion of ministers of the established Church, these ministers later acknowledging that she had used seventy-two different languages;⁵³ she and her company, in connection with all aboard were saved from a watery grave on the way to America, through special act of God to save his chosen people, and this deliverance came following a vision to her in which two bright angels of God gave her this assurance.⁵⁴ There were instances in which food prepared for small

49. *Yeats, Christ's First and Second Appearing.* p. 619

50. *Ibid.* p. 620.

51. *Evans, Shakers Compendium, Hist., Princ., etc.* p. 134.

52. *Yeats, Drawings from Old Shaker Journals.* p. 29.

53. *Evans, Shakers Compendium.* p. 135.

54. *Evans, Shakers Compendium.* p. 135

groups of people was shared by large numbers, there being plenty for all, and some left.⁵⁵ Believers testified that when they had given food for Mother Ann and her followers, they had more left than originally, and when their meadows were pastured to excess by the beasts of visiting Believers, they found them more fresh than if they had not been touched for a week.⁵⁶ Sick people were healed following their anointing with oil, and cripples were made to walk and the dumb to speak.⁵⁷

These mighty signs and wonders convinced the Believers that it was the beginning of Christ's second reign upon the earth.⁵⁸ The days of darkness, brought on by the apostasy⁵⁹ from the church of Christ, were past and the True Church of Christ was again established.⁶⁰ Mother Ann, God's chief instrument in establishing His work again upon the earth, was a prophet, but more than a prophet, she was the Second Appearance of Christ.⁶¹ Her disciples bore testimony of the power that she possessed, one witness stating that "So great was the manifestation of the power of God in Mother Ann at this time that many were unable to abide her presence; -- her words were like flames of fire, and her voice like peals of thunder; -- and her countenance was very beautiful and glorious".⁶² Another witness said, "Her countenance appeared bright and shining, like an angel of glory, and

55. Sears, *Clearings from Old Shaker Journals*. p. 126, 129.

56. *Ibid.* p. 130.

57. Evans, *Shakers Compendium*. p. 181.

58. Sears, *Clearings from Shaker Journals*. p. 93.

59. Youngs, *Christ's First and Second Appearing*.

60. Evans, *Shakers Compendium*. p. 66.

61. Youngs, *First and Second Appearing*. 1.

62. *Ibid.* p. 618.

62. Testimony of James Goodman, quoted in *Clearings from Old Shaker Journals*. p. 156.

she seemed to be overwhelmed with the glory of God".⁶³ and still another said, "So great was the confidence that Mother Ann inspired in her followers that they left everything to her judgment without question".⁶⁴ Mother Ann herself sensed the greatness of her mission, and recognized her superiority to the apostles of old when she said, "The apostles in their day saw us through a glass darkly; but we see face to face, and see things as they are....."⁶⁵

Similarities in various phases of the belief in the supernatural between Shakers and Mormons is apparent. Both placed confidence in inspired leaders and followed their judgment almost without question. Leaders in both groups prophesied, received visions and revelations, spoke in tongues and healed the sick. In a general way, then, there is a great similarity between the two groups, but if one follows the comparisons too closely, important differences can also be noted. For instance, the Mormons never thought of Joseph Smith as the Second Appearance of Christ,⁶⁶ and they would have said that it was impossible for a woman to play so important a church role as Ann Lee claimed, since women cannot hold the priesthood.⁶⁷ The priesthood and authority, according to the Mormon claims, came from actual beings from the unseen world and was passed from one person to another by the laying on of hands. With the Shakers the authority came from the Holy Ghost, and the person who could best exercise the gifts of

63. Testimony of Thankful Bruce, quoted in *Writings from Old Shaker Journals*. p. 66.

64. Sears, *Writings from Old Shaker Manuscripts*. p. 103.

65. Evans, *Shakers Compendium*. p. 153.

66. There seems to have been some people in the Mormon church who thought that Joseph Smith might be some unique figure other than the one which he was usually credited with being. Thus in Whitney's, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, Joseph Smith is reported to have said, "Should to God that I might tell you who I am". p. 48. Foot note.

67. *Doc. and Cov.*, Section 49, verse 22

the spirit thus became the one of greatest authority and the leader in the community. Healings were relatively more important in the Mormon communities, and speaking in tongues in the Shaker societies. The spiritual manifestations were accompanied by violent bodily exercises in the Shaker societies, while the bodily exercises occurred less frequently, if at all, in the Mormon communities.

Comparison of the supernatural beliefs of these two peoples again raises the question of antecedents. In this case there is no question of the priority of claim since the Shaker society is nearly a hundred years older. The Shaker society in America began with the American revolution, thus making it a full half century older than the Mormon organization. But when one attempts to show what influence it exerted on Mormonism, it is a different, and much more difficult matter. Its societies being established in New York, on the main highways running West, during the half century preceding the rise of Mormonism, could easily have exerted an influence on the Mormon prophet. Their missionaries visited the section where the Smiths resided in 1826, and in 1829 established a small society at Indian Bay not a great distance from Palmyra. There were also Shaker societies near the Mormon settlements in Ohio, and Mormon literature mentions these a few times. In March, 1831, the Prophet received a revelation instructing Sidney Rigdon, Parley P. Pratt, and Leamon Copley⁶⁸ to "preach my gospel which ye have received, unto the Shakers".⁶⁹ The revelation stated that these people had a desire for some of the truth, but not all, and some of their errors were pointed out in the revelation. The Shakers claim that the Second Appearance of Christ had already taken place was

68. Leamon Copley was a Shaker who had been converted to Mormonism.
 Cr. Doc. and Cov., Section 49.

rejected, and his coming was definitely projected to some uncertain future date; the laying on of hands as the method of receiving the Holy Ghost was taught, and this had to be done by an Elder of the Mormon church. The Shaker doctrine of celibacy was denounced as not coming of God, as was also their refusal to eat meats. It was emphatically stated that Christ would not come in the form of a woman.⁷⁰ The missionaries followed instructions and preached to the Shakers, though we are told that they made no impression.⁷¹

In the Quaker religion we find some resemblances to Mormonism, though perhaps not so many as in the two societies mentioned. Since this group is so well known, we will simply point out some beliefs which also appear in Mormonism. We have the testimony of the wife of George Fox, the founder of Quakerism, who in speaking of her husband's work says, "he was the instrument in the hand of the Lord in this present age.....to preach the everlasting gospel, which had been hid from many ages and generations; the Lord revealed it unto him, and made him open that new and living way, that leads to life eternal, when he was but a youth and a stripling".⁷²

70. But Mormonism has taught a female element in the Godhead, a doctrine taught earlier by the Shakers. For the Shaker point of view see, *Christ's First and Second Appearing*, P. 503 following. The Mormon doctrine of pre-existence, which makes every person born upon the earth the spirit child of God, calls for the maternal element in the Godhead. This doctrine is probably best illustrated in the song, "O my father", one of the women's most popular songs. The verse most applicable is as follows:

"I had learned to call Thee Father,
Through Thy spirit from on high,
But until the key of knowledge was restored,
I knew not why.
In the heavens are parents single?
No, the thought makes reason stare,
Truth is reason, truth eternal, tells me
I've a Mother there."

71. *History of the Church*, Vol. I., p. 188. See note.

Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt, 1st Ed., p. 85.

72. Testimony of Margaret Fox. *Journal of Geo. Fox*, Vol. II, p. 375.

Thomas Ellwood says, "This holy man was raised up by God in an extraordinary manner, for an extraordinary work, even to awaken the sleeping world, by proclaiming the mighty day of the nation, and publishing the everlasting gospel of the inhabitants of the earth, after the long and dismal night of apostasy and darkness".⁷³ These disciples of his believed him to be a prophet of God, and restorer of the ancient faith. He believed himself to be called of God and sent to warn the world.⁷⁴ The Holy Ghost was present with him and his people, and the gifts of the spirit were manifested in signs such as the casting out of evil spirits, healing,⁷⁵ and the speaking in tongues.⁷⁶ Fox received numerous revelations and visions, and predicted events of the future. His predictions were principally by way of warning, telling of the judgments of God which awaited if the people did not repent. They refused to heed his warning and in 1660 much of London was destroyed by fire, and God vindicated his prophet.⁷⁷ One of his enemies, who had accused him of representing himself as Jesus Christ, was called a Judas, and told that he would suffer the same death as Judas. In short time he hanged himself.⁷⁸ Probably the most distinguishing characteristic of Quakerism was the belief that every member had the right to receive inspiration and be led by the inner light. The society was extremely democratic in its concept of authority maintaining that no one individual was better than another and holding that the inspiration of the group was more infallible than that of the individual. In this respect there is quite a contrast with

73. George Fox's Journal, Vol. II, p. 369.

74. Ibid. Vol. I, p. 148, 149.

75. Ibid. Vol. I, p. 77.

76. See Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Quotation from Burroughs.

77. Geo. Fox's Journal, Vol. II, p. 46.

78. Ibid. Vol. I, p. 118.

the more highly institutionalized Mormon system.

But in Quakerism, as in the other societies described above, we find the notion that the popular Christian churches were dead spiritually and that the thing that was needed was to get back to primitive Christian times with proper workings of the Holy Spirit.

As in the case of Shakerism, the Quakers were in America in sufficient numbers, and in close enough contact with the section in which Mormonism arose to have influenced the Prophet and the early movement, though these influences would have to be proved from inferences rather than from direct proof.

Space will not permit our dealing with more of the minor Christian sects, with reference to this subject, but in passing let us say that there were numerous movements of one sort or another which had as their basis the desire to return to the condition of the Primitive church with its inspired leaders clothed with authority and power. The leaders of these movements had observed that the spiritual power which the New Testament chronicled was lacking in the Popular Christian churches. Where were the inspired leaders, and the signs that were to follow them that believed?⁷⁹ Surely there was something wrong with the large protestant churches, else there would be a stronger resemblance to the Christian church of Paul's time.

But the popular Christian churches were not entirely devoid of the mystical in their religion at this period. The doctrine of conversion which most of them taught, usually implied a mystical experience. The Baptists refused to take members into their society who had not received this experience, and many of their meetings were taken up with the re-

79. Mark 16:17, 18.

lating of these experiences by the prospective members. Certain branches of the Baptists, known as the six principle Baptists believed in the laying on of hands for the bestowal of the Holy Ghost. John Taylor, a Baptist preacher of the Frontier, describes a large baptismal service, following which, all the newly baptised were lined up and the elders laid their hands on the head of each and prayed most earnestly and fervently.⁶⁰

But the period of greatest display of the supernatural powers were the times of the revivals. The phenomena of bodily exercises and mental agitation were usually interpreted by the preachers of the time as supernatural in origin, some of the preachers taking the stand that it was of God and others that it was of the devil. The controversies regarding the value of certain revivalistic methods have been so intense that they have been at least partly the cause of several schisms, the New Side-Old Side Schism in 1741, and the Cumberland and New Light Schisms in the early nineteenth century being examples. In almost all instances the evangelistic ministers have been mystically minded, and explained the phenomena as coming from God.

James H. Hotchkiss, a Presbyterian minister in Western New York, who wrote the history of the Presbyterian and Congregational churches of that section from the earliest settlement up to 1848, believed that the revivals were the work of God.⁶¹ He is expressing the sentiment of practically the whole group of ministers when he expresses great satisfaction with the years in which the revivals have swept the country, and is regretfull

60. History of Ten Churches. p. 6.

61. History of the Pres. Church in Western New York, p. 131, 138, 141.

of the years when there had been none. His entire account of these intense revivals rings with optimism, because he believed them to be "the genuine work of the Holy Spirit of God".⁸² Charles C. Finney, who flourished during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, and who was the greatest evangelist of the period, was likewise a mystic. His own story of his conversion is in many respects like the account related by Joseph Smith and known in Mormon literature as the first vision.⁸³ Finney was baptised of the Holy Ghost so that he felt it go through him, body and soul,⁸⁴ he received his knowledge not from man but from Christ,⁸⁵ the spirit of the Lord came upon him so that he could speak,⁸⁶ he was visited by a lady who had been taught to read by the Holy Ghost.⁸⁷ "The Lord showed me as in a vision what was before me. He drew so near to me, while I was engaged in prayer, that my flesh literally trembled on my bones."⁸⁸

John Taylor has left us an account of a dream which he had in which he was warned by a messenger who appeared, that he should stop preaching or he would go to hell. Taylor decided the messenger was of the evil source, but he saw no difficulty in the idea that messengers from either God or the Devil could visit him.⁸⁹ He also tells of a woman who recognized him the first time she saw him because she had seen him previously in a dream, standing beside the Savior.⁹⁰

82. Totokin, *History of Western New York*, p. 132, 133.

83. Finney's vision came in the Autumn of 1821, Joseph Smith's in the Spring of 1820. For account of Finney's vision see Finney's *Autobiography*, Chapter I. and Wright, *Charles Grandison Finney*, Chapter I. For the Account of Joseph Smith's vision see, *History of the Church*, Vol. I, Chapt. I.

84. Finney's *Autobiography*, p. 20. 86. *Ibid.* p. 65. 87. *Ibid.* p. 75.

85. Finney's *Autobiography*, p. 83. 88. *Ibid.* p. 89.

89. John Taylor, *History of Ten Churches*, p. 33, 34.

90. *Ibid.* p. 35.

Cleveland tells of a Baptist preacher who noticed the jerks appearing in his audience, and paused and in a solemn tone said, "In the name of the Lord I command all unclean spirits to leave this place".⁹¹ The jerks disappeared.

The citing of a few cases like the above might easily give an exaggerated idea of the prominence of supernaturalism in the protestant churches, but that there was evidences of it all along there can be no question. When ever evangelic movements were started, there was an increase in the importance attached to the spiritual manifestations, and in times of less church activity there was less importance attached to the supernatural. In the early days of Methodism one is able to find practically all the spiritual gifts that are mentioned in the early Christian church. Wesley himself tells of "a cloud tempering the sun in answer to his prayer, of his horse being cured of lameness by faith; and of a blind Catholic girl who saw plainly when her eye rested on the New Testament but became blind again when she took up the Mass Book."⁹² But as Methodism became more institutionalized, and its members became economically prosperous there was a loss incurred in the zeal of the members, and the supernatural manifestations gradually declined.

Thus Mormonism which arose on the frontier in the fourth decade of the nineteenth century and presented the claim that the original gospel had been restored with all its spiritual gifts, did not find itself in an entirely hostile world. There were several societies already in existence which made similar claims and were attempting to live

91. Cleveland, Revivals in the West. p.125.

92. Farncoast, Mormons at Kirtland. p. 35. Taken from Lockey Mm. F. B. England in the 18th Century, Vol. III. Chapter 8.

again the experiences of the primitive saints. Irvingism, Shakerism, Quakerism, and a large number of societies not mentioned were striving in their particular way to attain that glorious condition. The larger protestant churches were not opposed to the idea of the miraculous, and occasionally had supernatural manifestations, but their experiences with the supernatural were so limited that they were, generally speaking quite skeptical. Most of them believed that in the process of conversion, the Holy Ghost was responsible for the change brought about, and beside this there was now and then an evangelist who desired to identify these religious experiences.

Organization

As Mormonism was attempting to return to the Primitive church conditions in regards to spiritual gifts, it was also attempting to reproduce its organization. "We believe in the same organization that existed in the primitive church, viz: apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc".¹ This Article of Faith does not describe the organization of the church but names some of the officers in the church. There is probably no New Testament basis for much of the actual organization, but most of this was supplied in the various revelations which the Prophet received from time to time as occasion arose. We will not follow the development of the church organization but will attempt to describe it as a more finished product, and then describe some of the churches and movements of the time with relation to similar ideas of organization.

Geographically the church is divided into stakes and wards, the wards, being subdivisions of the stakes. The ward is the smallest unit

1. Article six, Articles of Faith.

of church government and corresponds to the parish or congregation in the protestant churches. The stake is made up of a number of wards, the average number being about nine, and corresponds somewhat to the Presbytery in the Presbyterian church and the District in the Methodist church. In 1931 the church had 104 stakes and 930 wards.²

The ward is presided over by a Bishop and two counselors, whose chief function is to manage the affairs of the ward so that every member who is willing to work will be given something to do and thus kept active. The members of the Bishopric are not ministers or preachers in the sense of delivering speeches, but are the managers or supervisors of the ward and seek to keep the rather complicated machinery of the ward running without friction and at the highest point of efficiency. The pattern for this machinery is devised by the General Authorities of the church, who issue monthly bulletins to the various Bishops and Stake Presidents, beside sending personal letters when necessary. Members of the General Authorities also make personal contacts with the Bishops and Stake Presidents in the Quarterly Conferences which are held for each stake, and in the General Conferences of the church which are held at the church headquarters semi-annually.

The stake is presided over by a President and two counselors, who function for the stake in much the same fashion the Bishop does for the ward. The Stake Presidency meets with the Bishops monthly, where problems of the wards and of the whole stake are discussed. The stake has all the complicated machinery that the ward has, the various stake boards acting as aids to the Stake Presidency to assist them in the supervision of the ward auxiliary organizations.

The General Authorities of the church who are the executives for the

2. Comprehensive History of the Church, Roberts, Vol. VI, p. 549.

whole church organization, are composed of the President and his two counselors, the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, and the Presiding Bishop and his counselors.³ But the Presidency of the church together with the Twelve Apostles are more than the chief executives. They are also the highest legislative body of the church and the court of last appeals on all matters of importance to the church. By that body all policies of the church are determined, and all important officials such as Stake Presidents and ward Bishops are appointed. The Presiding Bishopric, under the direction of the Presidency of the church and the quorum of Twelve, deals directly with the Stake Presidents and ward Bishops in relation to the tithing, the ward sacrament and priesthood meetings, and the Aaronic Priesthood.

The fifteen men who compose the Presidency of the church and the Quorum of Apostles are a self-perpetuating body. When the President of the church is removed by death, the Presidency is declared vacant and the Quorum of Twelve elects the new President, who chooses his counselors. When vacancies occur in the Quorum of Apostles, the First Presidency and the Quorum of Apostles make selections to fill the vacancy.

From the description given, the General Authorities would seem to have unlimited power in the Mormon church. That their power is tremendous no one will deny, but the charges sometimes made that the Mormon people are mere dupes of the system, and that the leaders of the church are exploiting the people for personal ends is certainly false. Before any important official is inducted into office in the church he must be "sustained" by a vote of the Mormon people assembled in conference. If

3. There are other officers in the General Authorities of the church which we will not describe because they are not pertinent to the particular part of the organization we are describing here.

the individual be a Bishop, he must be sustained by the members of the ward in mass meeting, before he takes over the work as Bishop, and if a Stake President, he is sustained by a vote of the stake members so assembled. Moreover he must be sustained at stated intervals by his people, this period never being over one year. Thus no individual in the church can serve in any important capacity if the members under him are opposed to him, the system working out somewhat like the British Government which must resign in case a vote shows lack of confidence.

There are two phases of this organization that we desire to investigate in its relation to organizations among which it arose. The first is the attempt to incorporate within itself the officials of the Primitive church and the second is the strong centralized government which developed.

In the preceding section in dealing with the Irvingite movement in England, we called attention to the fact that these people had apostles, and prophets who were endowed with spiritual power. It was their belief that twelve apostles⁴ among the gentiles were necessary in preparation for Christ's second coming. These were appointed between the years 1820 and 1835, but were not perpetuated, the last one died in 1861. In addition to apostles and prophets they had other officers mentioned in the New Testament and they were trying to imitate as closely as possible the Primitive church.⁵

4. These were not chosen by the people, but were made known by the Holy Spirit.

5. See especially, Miller, History and Doctrines of Irvingism, Vol. 2, Chapt. I., pp. 23-86, 201. Their organization is rather complicated, but they included among their officers apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, deacons, elders, bishops and priests. "Apostles, Angels, (Bishops) Priests, and Deacons, constitute a fourfold Order of degree, each step being higher than the preceding step. But Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, and Pastors constitute a fourfold Ministry of kind each being different from the others. p. 81.

That the pattern of these people and the Mormons were very similar in this and several other respects is shown by the statement of one of the Mormon missionaries, who said, "The Irvingites are a people that have counterfeited the truth, perhaps, the nearest of any of our modern sectarians.The Irvingites have apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists and angels. They profess to the gift of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues, and in some instances the gift of healing."⁶

In America there were also attempts made to get back the Apostolic organization. Roger Williams had recognized the need of Apostles, and stated that until God sent them there would not be the authority of God upon the earth.⁷

The Separate Baptists in the South made an attempt to establish the ancient officials in their church.⁸ In 1774 at an annual association Elder Samuel Harries was chosen as an apostle, and all the ministers present laid their hands on his head and ordained him an apostle. Later in the year two others, John Waller, and E. Craig were appointed as apostles. But the organization of apostles got no farther, as they decided it was "only the old plan of bishops under a new name." In the last decision it was agreed that the office of apostles, like that of prophets, was the effect of miraculous inspiration and did not belong to ordinary times.⁹

Another movement which also arose in the South was that led by Abbe M. Sargent, who was originally a Baptist preacher, but at the period of which we speak, a Universalist preacher. Sargent came from Virginia to Southern Ohio about 1800, and was quite successful as a preacher there.

6. Bronson Pratt, *Millennial Star*. Vol. 3, No. 3, July 1843, p. 36.

7. Sweet, *Story of Religion*. p. 103.

8. Temple's *History of the Rise and Progress of Baptists in Virginia*. p. 60f.

9. *Ibid.* p. 82.

"It was spread over the country that he was inspired, and conversed with angels daily, from whom he received revelations."¹⁰ He founded a sect known as the Halcyon Church, and gathered around him twelve apostles, mostly women.¹¹ According to Cartwright he made quite a stir in and around Marietta, the "Presbyterian and Congregational preachers were afraid of him", and he had "a numerous following in the towns and country".¹² The organization was of short duration, and never gained importance.¹³

While these movements possessed officers with names similar to those used in the Mormon organization, the Mormon organization developed to be very different from them. In this respect it resembled much more the Methodist organization with its centralization. We have already given a brief description of the Methodist organization of this period,¹⁴ and we will now call attention to certain similarities which developed in the Mormon system.

The method of dividing and subdividing the territory into convenient units are very similar. Thus in the Mormon church we have wards and stakes, which correspond to the circuits and districts of the Methodist church. Certain boundaries were set and people living within these boundaries belonged to the particular ward and stake in which they resided, or in the Methodist church to the circuit and district.

The idea of appointment rather than of election of officers is also similar. As has just been described, officials in the Mormon

10. Finley, Autobiography, or Pioneer Life in the West., p.373

11. Ibid. p.257.

12. Cartwright, The Backwoods Preacher, a Biography. p.50.

13. Robinson, The Universalist Church in Ohio. pp. 11-17.

14. Chapter 2.

church were appointed by those higher up in authority, and 'sustained' by those over whom they presided. In the Methodist church this was also true, the Bishop appointed his presiding elders and circuit riders, (ministers) and determined the district or circuit each was to serve.

The idea of delegated authority, passing from the Methodist bishop, to the presiding elder, thence to the circuit rider, is similar in the Mormon church, the authority passing from the General Authorities, to the Stake President, thence to the Bishops. In both churches it was expected that those in lesser offices should respect and obey those in higher offices. Insubordination would be followed by removal from office if the offending individual did not repent.

There is an important difference in the two organizations pertaining to the selection of the highest church officials. The bishops in the Methodist church were elected by the delegates at the General Conference. This Conference is also the law making body for the church. The highest officials in the Mormon church are not elected but are a self perpetuating body as indicated above, and the Mormon church possesses no body comparable to the General Conference of the Methodist church.

The Mormon Bishops and Stake Presidents more nearly resembled the Baptist preacher than they did the Methodist preacher. The Methodist preachers were a professional and paid group, while in the Baptist church in the West they were at most only semi-professional and were only partly paid if at all. The Mormon Bishops and Stake Presidents were chosen because of their leadership and ability to manage, rather than their ability to preach or expound the doctrines of the church.

Word of Wisdom

Under date of February 27, 1833, the Prophet received a revelation known in Mormon literature as the 'Word of Wisdom'.¹⁵ In this revelation wine and strong drinks were condemned as being injurious to the body, and were not to be used by the faithful Saints, except for sacramental purposes, and there only pure home-made wine was to be used. In addition to the ban on liquor, it was stated that tobacco was harmful to the body and should not be used, and meats should be used only sparingly.

In dealing with the contemporary temperance movements we will not go into the history of the temperance question, but will give in very brief fashion a few facts to show the general condition at the time the church arose. Before the War of 1812 there had been some agitation for reform on the liquor question. Anthony Benezet of Philadelphia published a book in 1774 with the descriptive title, "The Mighty Destroyer Displayed, in some Account of the Dreadful Havock made by the Mistaken Use as well as Abuse of Distilled Spirituous Liquors". He said that God was displeased with seeing his children abuse their bodies with liquors.¹⁶ Dr. Benjamin Rush, also of Philadelphia, drew up "Directions for Preserving the Health of Soldiers". He also wrote "An Inquiry into the Effects of Spirituous Liquors on the Human Body". In these writings he tried to show the harmful effects of liquors on the human system.¹⁷

But following the War of 1812, the agitation against the liquor condition became more than the voices of a few, and took on the aspect of a general movement. By 1826 there was sufficient backing to organize

15. Doctrine and Covenants, Section 89.

16. Channing, "A History of the United States. Vol. V. p. 172.

17. Channing, A History of the United States, Vol.V., p. 173.

the "American Society for the Promotion of Temperance".¹⁸ In 1829 the society had listed one thousand societies with a total membership over one hundred thousand. In two more years that number had doubled, and by 1832 "Official estimates of the time, placed the number of societies at four thousand, with more than five hundred thousand active members".¹⁹

The leading spirits in the reform movement realized the value of the churches in combating the evil, and from the first the churches were important.²⁰ In fact men like Peter Cartwright,²¹ and James B. Finley,²² who were Methodist preachers on the frontier, claim that they were active long before the temperance societies began, and that they got their inspiration from the Methodist discipline. Certainly many of the frontier preachers were bitter enemies of liquor and did much in shaping public opinion in the circuits they visited. No doubt the Methodist church wielded the greatest influence for temperance in the early days,²³ but other church organizations and leaders were busy. In 1827 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church passed resolutions instructing the various Presbyteries to cooperate with the American Temperance Society.²⁴ Congregationalists and Baptists also took aggressive stands for the temperance movement, and even Lutherans and Episcopalians, who were accused of being indifferent to the movement, had individual members and congregations who were deeply interested.²⁵

18. Krout, *The Origin of Prohibition*. p. 108.

19. *Ibid.* p. 129.

20. *Ibid.* p. 112.

21. Cartwright, *The Backwoods Preacher, a Biography*. pp. 162-163; 212-214.

22. Finley, *Autobiography*. pp. 248-252; 299.

23. Finley says that any one refused to drink were called Methodist fanatics by way of reproach. p. 249.

24. Krout, *The Origin of Prohibition*. p. 112.

25. *Ibid.* p. 113.

Since the movement was so closely connected with the churches, it was bound to be carried on under the guise of religion. "Temperance workers were evangelists preaching a new gospel, and they stated its dogmas in the pulpit phraseology of the day. Persons who responded to the powerful appeal and signed the pledge were known as 'converts'".²⁶ Soon leaders in the churches began to advocate the making of temperance a requirement for membership in the church. Wilbur Fish, principal of Wesleyan Academy in Massachusetts, "believed that the interests of his church would best be served, if he could persuade it to purge its membership of all who refused to renounce the use of ardent spirits".²⁷

The movement was strongest in New England and in the parts of the West which had been settled by the New Englanders.²⁸ In Western New York, where the Mormon church arose, there was a 'solid belt' of these temperance societies corresponding to the territory settled by New Englanders. The Ohio temperance societies were also numerous located among the New England settlers, and hence we find them very numerous in the section where the Mormons settled in Ohio.²⁹

The 'Word of Wisdom' was thus given at a time when interest in reform of the liquor evil was quite general in America but especially intense in the New England section and among the New England settlers in the West. We will now investigate the situation regarding tobacco.

26. Ibid. p. 113.

27. Ibid. p. 114.

28. Ibid. p. 129.

29. Grant, The Origin of Prohibition. P. 129, 130.

The use of tobacco was opposed in Europe from the time of its introduction there. Lizards states that more than a hundred volumes issued from the press against it within a few years.³⁰ In 1616 King James of England wrote a pamphlet entitled, "Counterblast to Tobacco", in which he condemned its use. He said that it was "a branch of the sin of drunkenness, which is the root of all sins", and that men should not compel their wives to live "in a perpetual stinking torment", by keeping their breath foul with tobacco. "He concluded thus in reference to smoking, 'Have you not reason to be ashamed, and to forbear this filthy novelty, so basely grounded, so foolishly received, and so grossly mistaken, in the right use thereof. A custom loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lungs, and in the black, stinking fume thereof, nearest resembling the horrible Stygian smoke of the pit that is bottomless'".³¹

Lizards describes a case of a man who contracted cancer of the tongue, in 1831, which the Doctor considered had been caused by tobacco smoking.³² He also describes experiments performed on animals with tobacco, in 1817, showing the harmful and poisonous effects on the physical organism.³³

In the 'Journal of Health', published in Philadelphia in 1829 and following, there are found numerous articles condemning the use of liquor, tobacco, tea and coffee, and excessive meat eating. This magazine was published by an association of physicians and the articles published there were, of course, approved by that association. Tobacco is condemned as "an absolute poison.In whatever form it may be employed, a portion of the active principles of the tobacco, mixed with the saliva,

30. Miller and Lizards, Alcohol and Tobacco, Second part. p. 14.

31. Miller and Lizards, Alcohol and Tobacco, Second part. p. 60f.

32. Ibid. p. 68.

33. Ibid. p. 55.

invariably finds its way into the stomach, and disturbs or impairs the functions of that organ. Hence most, if not all, of those who are accustomed to the use of tobacco, labour under dyspeptic symptoms. They experience, at intervals, a want of appetite -- nausea -- inordinate thirst -- vertigo -- pains and distension of the stomach -- disagreeable sensations of the head -- tremors of the limbs -- disturbed sleep, and are more or less emaciated.....Dr. Cullen informs us that he has observed several instances in which the excessive use of tobacco in the form of snuff has produced.....loss of memory, futuity, and other symptoms of a weakened or senile state of the nervous system induced before the usual period".³⁴

Dr. M'Allister asserts "that few substances are capable of exercising effects so sudden and destructive as this poisonous plant. Prick the skin of a mouse with a needle, the point of which has been dipped in the essential oil of tobacco, and immediately it swells and dies. Introduce a piece of common 'twist' as large as a kidney bean, into the mouth of robust man, unaccustomed to this weed; soon he is affected with fainting, vertigo, nausea, vomiting, and loss of vision....."³⁵

That these doctors were aware of the harmful effects of tobacco, and that they were opposed to its use, there can be no doubt. But tobacco was opposed for other reasons as well as its bad effect upon the health. Ministers were arraigned for smoking and chewing, and of one of them it was said, "Some families have no trouble in keeping their houses clear of

34. Journal of Health, Vol. I, Oct. 7, 1829. p. 37.

35. Ibid. Vol. I, July 14, 1830. p. 329. Dr. M'Allister read a dissertation on the Medical Properties, and Injurious Effects of the Habitual use of Tobacco, before the Medical Society of the county of Oneida, at the semi-annual meeting, Jan. 5th, 1830, of which excerpts were printed in the Journal of Health, of this issue.

tobacco smoke at all times, except when a certain minister comes; as though it were a part of ministerial prerogative to be filthy. There are many ministers of whom one cannot even ask a civil question, and receive the answer with a quiet stomach.The expense of tobacco, I suppose, is not an object of consideration to one who has a fat salary, and who already gives as much as he wishes to, for the spread of the Gospel. But I think no minister's complaints of poverty, small salary, and etc. are entitled to attention, while he indulges this expansive luxury..... Let ministers, who wish to be always alive to duty, and to have their faculties in full vigor for saving souls, make one single effort, and break the chains of the tobacco appetite, and be free. I do know, from conference with many brethren recently, that it is perfectly practicable, and that they will feel all the better for it. Let it be done universally, and I verily believe we shall have a great deal more fire, and no smoke."³⁶

Sufficient has perhaps been given to show that at least an important sentiment in America was against the use of tobacco, since there were both ministers and doctors who opposed its use. That this interest in the non-use of tobacco extended into the section in which Mormonism made its home in Ohio is proved by the activities of Alexander Campbell, and by the notice which appeared in the 'Millennial Harbinger', the official paper for Campbell at that time.³⁷ This notice was as follows: "New Edition of the Journal of Health. This very acceptable publication may now be procured from its commencement in one neat octavo volume.....Its arguments in favor of temperance in every sort of enjoyment are deserving the notice and respect of Christians, who in these things, should set an example for

36. Journal of Health, April 13, 1831. Vol. II, p. 234.

37. The Millennial Harbinger, published in Bethany, Virginia, had a circulation in the Ohio section where the Mormons settled. One of the 'Campbellite' ministers, Sidney Rigdon, joined the Mormons there.

the imitation of all others."³⁸ This same paper under date of June 7, 1830, after telling of the organized fight against rum, brandy and whisky says, "We want a combination against tobacco in the three forms of chewing, smoking and snuffing. No one can tell how many lives this would save, how many diseases prevent, and how many comforts it would secure."³⁹

Articles against the use of tea, coffee, and excessive meat eating, appear frequently in contemporary literature.⁴⁰

* * * * *

The purpose of this chapter was to see to what extent some of the more distinctive Mormon beliefs and practices were found in the contemporary churches. Only a few were considered but they will serve as samples of the general situation. Other theses have been written on certain phases of Mormonism which touch on this question and to these the reader is referred for the background of other Mormon beliefs and practices.⁴¹

38. Millennial Harbinger, Vol. II, p. 107.

39. Millennial Harbinger, June 7, 1830, Vol. I, p. 281. This issue of the Harbinger also has a summary of an article from the Journal of Health some of which has also been quoted in this paper. p. 81, Millennial Harbinger.

40. Chicago Theological Seminary has original letters written by Missionaries and ministers during this period, from Ohio and New York. These letters show that the temperance question was a live one, and tea, coffee, and excessive meat eating are frequently mentioned. See especially letters numbered 1091, 1299, 1478, 1081, 1499, 1527, 1047, 1060, 1641, 1472 $\frac{1}{2}$, 412, 822; See also Journal of Health, Vol. I, p. 6, 19, 99, 276.

41. The background of Mormon Communism is treated by Joseph A. Geddes in "United Order Among the Mormons". Published Thesis, New York, 1922. The background of the Millennial Ape of the Mormons is treated to some extent by Russel B. Swensen in "New Testament Influence on Mormon Eschatology". Masters Thesis, University of Chicago, 1931. Other Theses of special interest in this field are, E. E. Erickson, "The Psychological and Ethical Aspects of Mormon Group Life". Published Thesis, University of Chicago Press, 1922; William Earl LaRue, "The Foundations of Mormonism". Published Thesis, 1919; Lowry Nelson, "The Mormon Village, A Study in Social Origins". Ph. D. Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1929; Daryl Chase, "Sidney Rigdon, Early Mormon". Masters Thesis, University of Chicago, 1931.

SUMMARY

The Smith family, including Joseph, the Founder of Mormonism, moved from New England to Western New York and settled near Palmyra in 1814 or 1816. At that time the country had been settled twenty-five years and was past what would be considered the pioneer stage. Immigrants were moving in very rapidly at that time and continued to do so for a good many years. The rapidity of the settlement of this section is almost without parallel, and social, political and religious institutions had difficulty in adjusting fast enough to keep pace with the rise in population.

The period following the Revolutionary War was one of spiritual deadness for the churches. But the revivals which came in the closing years of the 18th and opening years of the 19th centuries added many to the various churches. Western New York, which had been settled by New Englanders was largely Congregational and Presbyterian in religion although the unchurched outnumbered the churched many times. Gradually Baptists and Methodists gained a foothold in the section, and by the time of the founding of the Mormon church, (1830) they were well established, as were most of the well known Protestant churches.

The use of the 'circuit system' by the Methodists and of the 'farmer-preacher' by the Baptists proved very successful and enabled those two churches to make greater gains on the frontier than any of the other religious bodies.

Western New York was visited by the revivals of the early 19th century and they continued to occur till well past the period with which we are dealing. Most of the excesses in regard to bodily exercises so common in Kentucky were lacking. The agitation in Western New York was mental accompanied by an unusual amount of prayer. Joseph Smith became 'converted' during this revival period and announced that he had been commanded by

by heavenly messengers to restore the Church of Jesus Christ which had been lost to the inhabitants of the earth.

Though the church was organized in Western New York, it did not gain many converts there and moved to Northern Ohio within a year where it found more congenial surroundings. The Campbellites who were striving toward a return of the ancient order of things came into the church in relatively large numbers. Converts came to the church from many states and from several nations as a result of intensive missionary propaganda.

The Mormons believed that the powers and blessings of Apostolic times had been restored through a prophet whom God had raised up for that purpose. Similar claims were made by Quakers, and Shakers, who were older organizations than the Mormons, and by the Irvingites who arose at about the same time. These organizations were well known to the Mormon leader but to what extent he appropriated ideas from them is difficult to determine.

The Mormon organization showed many similarities to the various organizations already extant, the centralization and details being very much like the Methodist organization. The 'Word of Wisdom', which was given as a revelation by the prophet to his people, gave religious sanction to a movement already prominent in America. The use of liquor and tobacco was vigorously opposed by doctors and clergymen before the Mormon opposition to it occurred.

It was thought impracticable to deal with more of the contemporary doctrines and practices, but treatises on some of these can be found to a limited extent in theses some of which have been published.

If the doctrines and practices selected for treatment here can be taken as an index of the whole, it would appear that most of the Mormon doctrines were to be found in the contemporary churches.

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